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**THESIS**

**SOVEREIGNTY UNDER SIEGE: DRUG TRAFFICKING  
AND STATE CAPACITY IN THE CARIBBEAN AND  
CENTRAL AMERICA**

by

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June 2016

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CAPACITY IN THE CARIBBEAN AND CENTRAL AMERICA**

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## ABSTRACT

Drug trafficking organizations have increased their prominence throughout the Caribbean and Central America. These organizations undermine the rule of law, increase levels of violence and corruption, and hamper development, all of which can weaken a state. Weak or failing states become domestic and regional burdens that spill over into neighboring countries and cause secondary and tertiary problems. This thesis examines causes for different state capacities in the Caribbean and Central America through case study comparisons between Haiti, the Bahamas, Nicaragua, and Guatemala. The varying state capacities' interaction with similar drug trafficking pressures accounts for different state legitimacy statuses. Haiti's institutional and ideological influences account for its low state capacity (SC) as compared to the Bahamas. Policy decisions to improve security forces' (SECFOR) state capacity and cooperate with U.S. counternarcotic operations result in the Bahamas' higher SC. Nicaragua and Guatemala's transitions to democracy have resulted in different SECFOR capacities. Nicaragua chose to improve its SECFOR and currently receives assistance from the United States to combat drug trafficking. In contrast, Guatemala institutionalized a corrupt and ineffective SECFOR during its transition to peace. Both regional comparisons prove that SC is a choice. Understanding this relationship can guide domestic and international policy incentives or directives to assist countries in a *narco* or *under siege* state legitimacy status.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBSI	Caribbean Basin Security Initiative
CDS	Sandinista Defense Committees
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CPIA	Country Performance Institutional Assessment
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency
DEU	drug enforcement unit
DID	Directorate of Defense Information
DOD	Department of Defense
DTO	drug trafficking organization
DTP	drug trafficking pressure
DV	dependent variable
EPS	Sandinista's People's Army
FNM	Free National Movement
FSI	Fragile States Index
FSLN	Sandinista National Liberation Front
GCOB	Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas
GDP	gross domestic product
IGO	international government organization
INC	International Narcotics Control
IV	independent variable
LAPOP	Latin American Public Opinion Surveys
MINT	Ministry of the Interior
MINUSTAH	UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OAS	Organization of American States
OC	organized crime
OPBAT	Operation Bahamas Turks and Caicos
PLP	Progressive Liberal Party

PM	prime minister
PNC	National Civilian Police
PS	Sandinista Police
RBDF	Royal Bahamian Defense Force
RBPF	Royal Bahamian Police Force
SAS	Small Arms Survey
SC	state capacity
SECFOR	security forces
SL	state legitimacy
UAC	unaccompanied children
UN	United Nations
UNO	Unión Nacional Opositora
URNG	Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States government

## I. INTRODUCTION

The global drug trade is a multi-billion dollar a year industry. Roughly 162 to 324 million people consume illicit drugs (of the cannabis, opioid, cocaine, or amphetamine classifications), which corresponds to 3.5–7 percent of the world population.<sup>1</sup> The sale of narcotics is a lucrative business in which success leads to exponential profits in comparison to the costs of production. For example, cocaine consumers in North America (50 percent) and European Union countries (25 percent) accounted for 75 percent of the world's cocaine use in 2012. The estimated value of the cocaine trade in these areas is 88 billion dollars.<sup>2</sup> Profit incentives alone account for the manner in which drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) seek to weaken state capacity in order to operate with relative impunity and without fear of incarceration.

Since the 1970s, DTOs have increased their prominence throughout the Caribbean and Central America. Far from benign, these organizations undermine the rule of law, increase levels of violence and corruption, and hamper development. This thesis asks the question: how does drug trafficking pressure (DTP) and state capacity (SC) explain variations of state legitimacy (SL)? In this thesis, I argue that DTP has a negative impact on SL, while SC has a positive impact on SL. That is, when DTP increases, SL decreases if SC is unable to combat the negative DTP impacts. Low SL is reflective of overall weak states and can bring numerous consequences to its population and neighboring countries.

The significance of the research question is that it can identify the causes for different levels of state legitimacy. Once the causes are identified, policy efforts can focus on restoring a state's political, economic, and social capacity so that the negative DTP impacts can be alleviated.

This study looks at the interaction of key variables related to a state's legitimacy. Next, it discusses the theory in relation to the variables to formulate a hypothesis

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *World Drug Report 2014* (New York: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014), accessed March 7, 2016, <https://www.unodc.org/wdr2014/en/drug-use.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

regarding state legitimacy. Furthermore, alternative hypotheses account for differences in SC resulting in varying SL. Last, the hypothesis is used to explain different state legitimacies in the Caribbean and Central America after the entrance of DTOs into the region.

## **A. THE VARIABLES**

This section reviews the literature that defines the independent and dependent variables related to a state's legitimacy. The first variable is state capacity as defined by different schools of thought. The next section describes tools used to measure SC. Third, a state model describes elements of a state that helps to identify areas that can result in different SC levels and the relationship between those elements and DTPs. The fourth section describes the result of low SC in weak or failing states and the importance of identifying them. The next section discusses the variable DTPs and its effects on the state the economic, political, and social realms. The last section defines SL and discusses its measurements.

### **1. INDEPENDENT VARIABLE 1: STATE CAPACITY**

State capacity (SC) is inherently related to a state's strength and can be defined in many ways. Measuring SC is crucial to determine whether or not DTO activities have an effect on SL. If SC is high, hypothesize that the effects of drug trafficking should be low, which means low crime rates, violence, and corruption levels. Therefore, state capacity that can combat the effects of DTPs should have a better SL status.

There are two schools of thought for measuring governance, also known as state capacity (SC). Fukuyama's school of thought measures how government functions, and the other, advanced by Rotberg, measures government outputs. Francis Fukuyama measures capacity according to "Weberian Bureaucracy."<sup>3</sup> He assesses quality of governance based on how government functions.

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<sup>3</sup> Weber favored a government dominated by a strong bureaucracy that can limit a government's political powers and corruption while allowing the market to function freely. Weber's bureaucrats are impersonal, consummate professionals who operate without emotion and simply execute their assigned duties within the rules and regulations of their billets. "Max Weber and State Bureaucracy," College Term Papers, accessed March 7, 2016, <https://www.collegetermpapers.com/viewpaper/1304082234.html>.

Fukuyama's four measurements for governance capacity and quality are procedural, input, output, and autonomy.<sup>4</sup> Procedural assessments focus on the way government administrators operate. For example, career progression procedures is the key focus of the evaluation of the quality of rules, regulations, and hierarchy. If a bureaucracy promotes based on personal favors or political patronage instead of technical proficiency, then there is room for corruption.<sup>5</sup> Next, governments that are too bureaucratic, or have "too much red tape," experience problems. For example, a highly bureaucratic government that operates with strict adherence to procedures can be highly inefficient and slow to act as compared to one that can execute directives from one person.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, capacity measures the ability of the government to produce expected outputs. Fukuyama uses tax extraction as the litmus test for a state's capacity and government quality. If a state is able to effectively and efficiently collect taxes, then the revenue generation can lead to provision of other public goods.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, capacity can be measured in terms of professionalization of government officials. Bureaucratic positions that have career potential with high standards increase capacity levels for governments.

The next measurement in Fukuyama's approach is output. Output looks at the performance of the bureaucracy in relation to society's expectations; however, output measurements do not take into account the impact that society has on the manner and

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<sup>4</sup> Francis Fukuyama, "What is Governance?" (Working Paper 314, Center for Global Development, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA, 2013), [http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/1426906\\_file\\_Fukuyama\\_What\\_Is\\_Governance.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/1426906_file_Fukuyama_What_Is_Governance.pdf), 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>6</sup> The U.S. acquisitions and procurement process regarding military equipment programs is highly inefficient due to procedures and lack of capacity to remain relevant. For example, the U.S. spent \$3 billion on the USMC Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV) Program, with an anticipated \$14.4 billion to produce 1,000 vehicles. The development of the EFV program began in the 1980s and was cancelled in January 2011. Christopher Drew, "Pentagon is Poised to Cancel Marine Landing Craft," *New York Times*, January 5, 2011, [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/06/business/06marine.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/06/business/06marine.html?_r=0).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 7.

way in which the government functions.<sup>8</sup> For example, an organized and bureaucratically resistant population can limit state capacity.<sup>9</sup>

The last governance measurement is autonomy. Autonomy relates to the ability of the bureaucracy to carry out mandates set by the political principal. Autonomy is inversely related to the number of mandates.<sup>10</sup> An ideal balance allows for a manageable amount of mandates to be executed without overbearing micromanagement. In the end, Fukuyama argues that extractive capacity (tax collection) and autonomy are the best ways to measure government quality.<sup>11</sup> If a bureaucracy has adequate capacity and competence, then more autonomy allows it to produce desirable outputs. On the contrary, inadequate capacity necessitates less autonomy and more direction from the political principal.<sup>12</sup> Fukuyama argues, “quality of governance is ultimately a function of the interaction of capacity and autonomy.”<sup>13</sup> The kind of metrics required to effectively measure qualities of governance with Fukuyama’s pitch is a data-collecting nightmare. He even admits this about his approach and recommends more simplified criteria for assessing governance.<sup>14</sup> The next method for evaluating state capacity provides more tangible and quantifiable data.

Robert I. Rotberg’s evaluation of state capacity measures tangible aspects of governance that provides clear statistical analysis. The statistics can be used to assess trends that may signal weakening of a state or deterioration of its sovereignty. For example, looking at infrastructure data such as miles of roads, telecommunications coverage, electric power, and healthcare provisions are some categories that provide tangible metrics to measure state capacity. These metrics can be used in conjunction with additional SC indicators to determine state strength, such as the fragile states index (FSI)

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<sup>8</sup> Fukuyama, “What is Governance?,” 9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 10–11.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

and World Bank governance aggregates. States with low public goods outputs (e.g., infrastructure), low governance ratings, and in a fragile or failing category according to the FSI are more vulnerable to the effects of DTO activities.

## 2. Measuring State Capacity

There are many ways to measure SC. The first is the World Bank's aggregate governance indicators, which provides a metric to measure governance SC. According to Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, governance is,

the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes (a) the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; (b) the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and (c) the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.<sup>15</sup>

These three elements of governance are then broken down into six measurable indicators, two for each element, which assist with assessing the strength of a particular country's aggregate governance.

According to World Bank 2014 governance rankings for 206 countries, Haiti ranks 186th out of 206 countries measured.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, also according to the 2014 rankings, three out of the four Central American countries rank in the fourth quintile: Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. The next quintile contains Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Jamaica. Last, the second quintile contains the Bahamas, which ranks 43rd out of 206 with a 76.25 percent average governance rank.

The ranking of aggregate governance indicators provides insight into the ability of a state to provide adequate levels of public goods. Combining tangible aspects from Rotberg's definition of a state's strength with a state's perceived governance rankings allows for a more thorough indication of a state's overall strength. These aspects also

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<sup>15</sup> Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, *The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues* (World Bank Policy Research working paper no. 5430, World Bank Institute, Washington, DC, 2010), [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1682130](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1682130), 6.

<sup>16</sup> "World Bank Governance Indicators," World Bank, accessed June 4, 2016, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=worldwide-governance-indicators>.

help to explain secondary and tertiary effects when internal and external pressures weigh on strained areas of a state's governance structure. State strength data allows for policy makers to develop agendas that can target weaker aspects of a country's governance in order to prevent the state from failing.<sup>17</sup>

The next SC measurement involves security forces. Security forces' [SECFOR (i.e., military and police)] rates can be used to assess SC and its effectiveness. SECFOR rates are the numbers of police officers or military personnel per 100,000 citizens. Theoretically, more SECFOR personnel per citizens (higher rate) should result in higher SC. That is, as SC in terms of SECFOR increases, dependent variables representative of SL, such as homicide, corruption, and clearance rates, should be affected. For example, high state capacity for SECFOR should result in lower homicide and corruption rates, while clearance rates increase. The dependent variables are a good indicator of SECFOR effectiveness. SECFOR SC is the institutional capacity of the security forces; both police and the military. If lower SECFOR rates in a country result in positive effects on crime, corruption, and clearance rates, then SECFOR SC is more effective than a country with higher SECFOR rates. This thesis uses both the World Bank's governance indicators and SECFOR rates to measure SC in the Caribbean and Central America.

### **3. The Structure of the State**

The structural components of a state provide a framework that illustrates areas where SC can differ between states. Barry Buzan's state model provides three components representing the realms for state capacity (political, economic, and social). The three components are represented by a triangle. The idea of the state is at the top, with the institutions and the physical base of the state as the legs.<sup>18</sup> The first two legs (idea and institutions) of the model can assist with identifying SC levels (high/low), while the third leg (base) depicts the relationship between SC and DTPs (see Figure 1).

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<sup>17</sup> "Failed States Index 2014: The Book," Funds for Peace, 9, <http://library.fundforpeace.org/cfsir1423>, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Johan Engvall, "The State under Siege: The Drug Trade and Organised Crime in Tajikistan," *Europe-Asia Studies* 58, no. 6 (2006): 831.

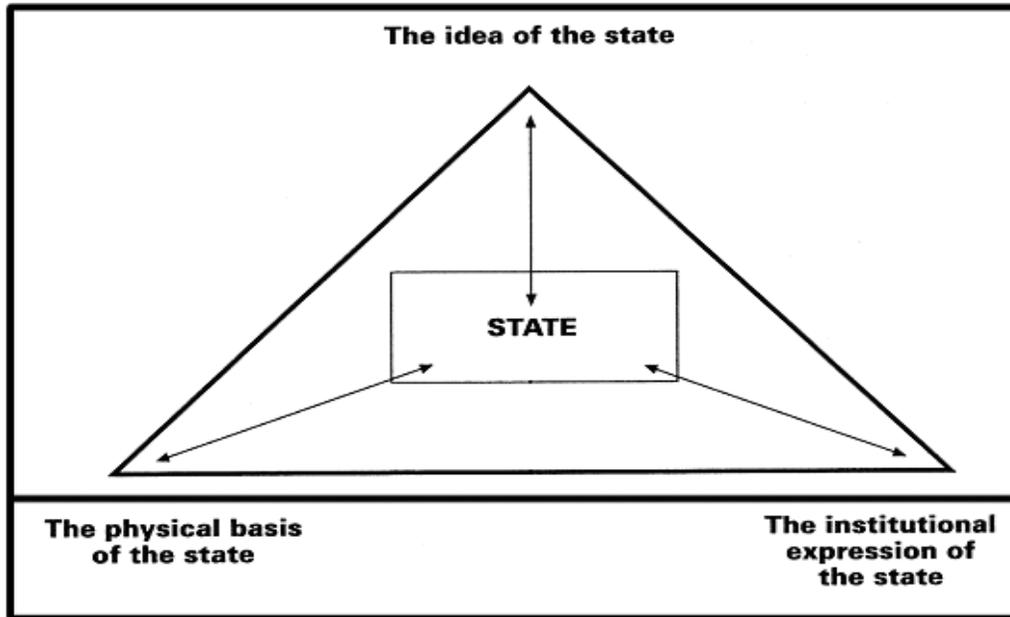


Figure 1. Buzan's State Model<sup>19</sup>

The idea of the state relates to two things: national identity and ideology. National identity is used to justify the existence of the state as representing the “will of the people.” Ideology helps to define the state’s political identity, and it assists in organizing institutions that give the idea structure.<sup>20</sup> The ideology is used as the foundation for the state’s political and economic structure, which is encapsulated by its institutions. According to Buzan,

In a properly constituted state, one should expect to find a distinctive idea of some sort which lies at the heart of the state’s political identity. What does the state exist to do? Why is it there? What is its relation to the society it contains?<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Source: Nicolas Lemay-Hebert, *Trying to Make Sense of the Contemporary Debate on State-Building: The Legitimacy and the Institutional Approaches on State, State Collapse and State-Building* (Ottawa: Center for International Policy Studies, University of Ottawa, 2010), [http://eprints.bham.ac.uk/829/1/PSA\\_-\\_Trying\\_the\\_Make\\_Sense.pdf](http://eprints.bham.ac.uk/829/1/PSA_-_Trying_the_Make_Sense.pdf), 9.

<sup>20</sup> Barry Buzan, *People States & Fear* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), 80.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

Comparing different ideologies can confirm or deny causes of weak SC in the selected case studies. For example, Haiti's political ideology could differ from that of the Bahamas and may serve as a cause of weakness in the state's apparatus.

Institutions are the tangible elements of the state that carry out the necessary functions designed to make it operate politically and economically. They include all branches of government and the laws that dictate how each will operate.<sup>22</sup> Institutions take the ideas of the state and put them into action.<sup>23</sup> Problems arise when the idea of the state is weak, and the institutions take on all functions of the state.<sup>24</sup> In this situation, those in power use the institutional state capacity to fulfill the ruling elites' self-interests, and they also use force to ensure coherence of and obedience to established rules.<sup>25</sup> According to Buzan, the Duvalier regime in Haiti is a fitting example of a state whose ideas were weak and the coercive institutional capacity was used to replace them.<sup>26</sup>

The last leg of the state model is the physical base (See Figure 1). The physical base includes the population and territory of the state. These entities are more definitive and tangible with regard to a sovereign state being under siege, because the effects on its people, property, and institutions are visible. For example, it is easier to identify the effects of DTPs by examining violence, corruption, and drug trafficking levels than to measure DTP impacts on institutions or the state's ideology. Furthermore, the effects of drug use on the population are quantifiable through social aspects, such as numbers of drug addicts, disease trends, and migration patterns (e.g., brain drain). Territorial threats to the state come in the form of alternate sources of force. For instance, criminal organizations, such as DTOs, are able to challenge the institutional SECFOR when the state weakens. Any weakening of institutions in the political and economic realms allows opportunities for DTOs to press their advantage. When the state weakens, DTOs use violence to ensure that corruption continues, the population becomes weary of political

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>23</sup> Engvall, "State under Siege," 833.

<sup>24</sup> Buzan, *People States & Fear*, 83.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

protest, and the legitimacy of the government is questioned internally and externally. The next section discusses weak or failing states and their potential impacts on SC.

#### 4. Failing States

A failed or weak state has many characteristics that identify internal problems indicative of low SC. First, failed states can experience open conflict, wherein two or more insurgencies exist and the insurgents direct dissent to the state. Also, failed states can be determined by an enduring nature of violence, which is not limited to the intensity of that violence.<sup>27</sup> This longevity of violence versus its intensity is the metric used to determine whether or not a state is failing. Moreover, failed states cannot control their peripheral borders. There are lawless areas in which non-state actors, such as DTOs, terrorist groups, and insurgents become prevalent.<sup>28</sup> Last, failed states have flawed institutions, lack infrastructural capacity (potholes), have poor, privatized education and medical systems, all of which further disenfranchises the public, “unparalleled economic opportunity for the elite and select few,” corruption flourishes, declining gross domestic product (GDP) and an increasing GINI index.<sup>29</sup> The GINI index is a measurement of the income distribution between the rich and poor for a country’s population.

According to Robert I. Rotberg, “A failed state is a country with a government that cannot or will not deliver essential political goods (public services) to its citizens.”<sup>30</sup> The levels of effective delivery of public goods determine the differences between strong and weak states and weak from failed or collapsed states.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, there is a hierarchy of political goods: security, laws, and political participation. “Thus, failed states are those political entities in international politics that supply deficient qualities and quantities of political goods and, simultaneously, no longer exercise a monopoly of

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<sup>27</sup> Robert I. Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 5.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>30</sup> Robert I. Rotberg, “Failed States: A Paradigm Revived,” *Africa and Asia: The Key Issues* (blog), March 12, 2014, <https://robertrotberg.wordpress.com/2014/03/12/failed-states-a-paradigm-revived/>, 3.

<sup>31</sup> Rotberg, *When States Fail*, 2.

violence within their territories.”<sup>32</sup> Rotberg also says weak states, “ignore their obligations to their citizens, and they fail to provide the essential societal glue of security that makes their citizens safe.”<sup>33</sup>

Without adequate security, a state will struggle to maintain a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, which threatens the existence of the state. Rotberg proposed several metrics to determine the strength of a state based on its provision of public goods. Examples of metric include “miles of paved roads per capita, life expectancy and maternal mortality rates, literacy and educational persistence data, GDPs per capita, voting rates, and the numbers of people killed in the throes of civil combat.”<sup>34</sup> A comparison of the metrics for Haiti and the Bahamas, combined with the governance indicators, can determine the strength levels of those states so that an assessment can be made for how DTPs influence SL.

## **5. Importance of Identifying Weak States**

Failing states are important to identify because they are vulnerable to DTPs’ negative effects. In addition, failing states often have low SL as a result of ineffective SC. DTOs take advantage of decreased SC in order to conduct their illicit activities. It is important to identify weakening states so that decisions can be made to increase state capacity and deter DTO activities from occurring.

Weak states have a plethora of problems associated with them. First, weak states can serve as a breeding ground or training incubator for terrorist organizations. According to Anthony Cordesman, “the concentration of terrorist violence can often be directly linked to major civil conflicts and failed nations that have weak and corrupt governments and deep sectarian, ethnic, racial, and tribal friction.”<sup>35</sup> Additionally, weak states usually lack the institutional capacity to combat or prevent terrorist organizations

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<sup>32</sup> Rotberg, “Failed States,” 3.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Rotberg, *When States Fail*, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman, *Broad Patterns in Global Terrorism in 2014* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2015), [http://csis.org/files/publication/150618\\_Patterns\\_in\\_Global\\_Terrorism\\_in\\_2014.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/150618_Patterns_in_Global_Terrorism_in_2014.pdf), 1.

from developing within their borders. According to the *New York Times*, “Failed states that cannot provide jobs and food for their people, that have lost chunks of territory to warlords, and that can no longer track or control their borders send an invitation to terrorists.”<sup>36</sup> Therefore, due to ineffectual enforcement of the rule of law or counterterrorism efforts, terrorist organizations view weak states as ideal locations in which to recruit, train, plan, and execute their agendas.<sup>37</sup>

In the Western Hemisphere, most countries acknowledge the potential threat that terrorism brings; however, they view transnational criminal organizations as a higher threat in areas where “corruption, weak government institutions, insufficient interagency cooperation, poor legislation, and a lack of resources” are prevalent.<sup>38</sup> These characteristics are common in the Caribbean and Central American countries under review in this thesis.

Although terrorist related incidents are low in the Western Hemisphere (less than 1,000 from 1970–2001) as compared to the rest of the world, there is potential for such organizations to infiltrate the fabrics of the weakened states in Latin America. From 1970 to 2001, there have only been 11 reported terrorist acts in Latin America, compared to 11 in the United States. The Global Terrorism Database does not include the 2009 Ft. Hood attacks, the 2013 Boston Bombing, the 2015 Marine Drill Center Attack in Tennessee, or the 2015 San Bernardino massacre in the U.S.<sup>39</sup>

The next problem associated with weak states is the proliferation of small-arms weapons. In Latin America, there are roughly one to two million weapons in circulation

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<sup>36</sup> “Fighting Terrorism at Gleneagles,” *New York Times*, July 8, 2005, [http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/08/opinion/fighting-terrorism-at-gleneagles.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/08/opinion/fighting-terrorism-at-gleneagles.html?_r=0).

<sup>37</sup> Stewart Patrick, “Weak States and Global Threats: Assessing Evidence of ‘Spillovers’” (working paper no. 73, Center for Global Development, Washington, DC, 2006), 14.

<sup>38</sup> Bureau of Counterterrorism, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2014* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State, 2014), <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2014/239409.htm>.

<sup>39</sup> “Incidents over Time,” Global Terrorism Database, accessed March, 15, 2016, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?page=1&search=latin%20america&charttype=line&chart=vertime&ob=GTDid&od=desc&expanded=yes#results-table>.

throughout the region.<sup>40</sup> In a region that is composed of several developing countries and weak states, the presence of so many weapons has negative consequences. Weak states are usually the source for making, distributing, or shipping small arms.<sup>41</sup> According to the Geneva-based Small Arms Survey (SAS) in 2015, the proliferation of small arms has significant impacts on the development of countries. The SAS reports, “Armed violence can trigger forced displacement, erode social capital, and destroy infrastructure.”<sup>42</sup> In addition, armed violence and transnational crime are mutually supportive activities that lead to increased trafficking of drugs, persons, corruption, and violence.<sup>43</sup> The risk factors associated with underdevelopment and armed violence are as follows: “weak institutions, economic inequality, exclusion of minority groups, unequal gender relations, limited education opportunities, persistent unemployment, organized crime (OC), and the availability of firearms and drugs.”<sup>44</sup> Thus, the combination of weak states and weapons result in several secondary and tertiary effects that make recovery difficult.

Furthermore, weak states attract transnational criminal organizations that are drawn to the perceived lawlessness or lack of enforcement capacity within their borders. In this environment, criminal organizations can operate with a level of impunity supported by rampant corruption, violence, high inequality, and low law enforcement capabilities. Countries in the Caribbean and Central America have served as hosts to the prolific drug trafficking shipment routes that take advantage of those countries’ weaknesses. There is an inverse relationship between the power of the state and the power of the DTOs. When the state is weak, the DTOs become stronger as they are able to ship more illicit materials and thereby make more money that is used to purchase protection in the forms of weapons and bribery of key public officials. This relationship is discussed in further detail when looking at the increased capacity of the Caribbean

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<sup>40</sup> Julie Marie Bunk and Michael Ross Fowler, *Bribes Bullets and Intimidation: Drug Trafficking and the Law in Central America* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), 20.

<sup>41</sup> Patrick, “Weak States,” 18.

<sup>42</sup> “Impact on Development,” Small Arms Survey, accessed February, 10, 2016, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/publications/by-region/americas.html#c2088>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

states to combat DTOs and the shift of the drug trafficking supply routes through Central America where the states were weaker.

Last, weak states have a tendency to cause spillover effects to their neighbors and the region as a whole.<sup>45</sup> According to Max Manwaring, weak states lead to:

human rights violations, torture, poverty, starvation, disease, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, trafficking in women and body parts, trafficking and proliferation of conventional weapons systems and weapons of mass destruction, genocide, ethnic cleansing, warlordism, and criminal anarchy.<sup>46</sup>

Weak states typically have porous borders and allow their internal problems to leak into the surrounding area. For instance, the mass migration of Central American unaccompanied children (UAC) rose 90 percent from 2013 to 2014.<sup>47</sup> During the spring and summer of 2014, record levels of UAC jumped to 27,000 but then rapidly dropped three months later only to rise again in 2015.<sup>48</sup> The migration patterns demonstrate two things: first, when the collective efforts of Mexico and the Northern Triangle countries (Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador) took steps to secure their borders, the numbers of UAC migrations dropped rapidly. Second, despite the increased state measures to deter migrations, there are still underlying factors that overpower state efforts to stop migrations.<sup>49</sup>

These underlying factors include high levels of violence; the Northern Triangle states have the highest murder rates in the world.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, economic conditions continue to cause high poverty levels that are exacerbated by severe droughts. The droughts are destined to cause significant food shortages, which could be the trigger for

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<sup>45</sup> Patrick, "Weak States," 21–22.

<sup>46</sup> Max G. Manwaring, "Security in the America: Neither Evolution nor Devolution-Impasse," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 15, no. 1 (2006): 69.

<sup>47</sup> "Rising Child Migration to the United States," Migration Policy Institute, accessed February 10, 2016, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/us-immigration-policy-program/rising-child-migration-united-states>.

<sup>48</sup> Marc R. Rossenblum and Isabel Ball, *Trends in Unaccompanied Child and Family Migration from Central America* [fact sheet] (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), 1–2.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

increased social unrest against a backdrop of political instability.<sup>51</sup> For example, in the Northern Triangle, two former presidents and the current president of Guatemala were charged with corruption crimes in 2015; this caused further weakening of and instability in the government.<sup>52</sup> The political instability debilitates the government's willingness or ability to respond to the growing crises in the region.

## **B. INDEPENDENT VARIABLE 2: DRUG TRAFFICKING PRESSURES**

Drug trafficking pressures (DTPs) affect state legitimacy in many ways. Chiefly, they affect the economic, political, and social realms.<sup>53</sup> In many examples throughout the world, DTOs serve as a parallel authority to the central government within the same border.<sup>54</sup> DTOs are able to fill this role due to the ability to rapidly gain capital through illegal means, which allows them to create secondary political, economic, and security frameworks.<sup>55</sup> These frameworks are on the periphery where state capacity is lacking. Essentially, where state capacity is weak, DTOs can operate and strengthen their operations through corruption and violence, such as happened in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in the mid-1990s to 2005.<sup>56</sup> In this context, drug trafficking and illicit activities are a function of opportunism.

The case examples in the former Soviet states of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Colombia show an indirect relationship wherein low economic SC created opportunities for DTOs to flourish. When the Soviet economy collapsed, rural areas were hit the hardest, as agricultural subsidies no longer existed. According to Marat, "The governments' inability to provide sufficient welfare to an impoverished rural population

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Erica Marat, "Impact of Drug Trade and Organized Crime on State Functioning in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan," *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 4, no. 1 (2006): 93.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 93–94.

<sup>56</sup> Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Hungary's governments faced non-state actor challenges to their central governments after the fall of the Soviet Union. In Kyrgyzstan, OCs were able to directly influence state politics through corruption and their acquired financial power used for political influence. Marat, "Impact of Drug Trade, 94.

and geographical proximity to Afghanistan created possibilities for fast accumulation of private capital from illicit businesses, including drug trafficking.”<sup>57</sup> The result was a secondary illicit economy that fueled power aspirations of DTOs to corrupt and control the political legitimacy of the state.<sup>58</sup> According to Francisco Thoumi, in Colombia “the drug trade has in fact weakened the country's economy by fostering violence and corruption, undermining legal activity, frightening off foreign investment, and all but destroying the social fabric.”<sup>59</sup> Nazih Richani argues that neo-liberal economic policies in Central America (El Salvador and Guatemala specifically) weakened the state, and DTOs took advantage of the situation.<sup>60</sup> The cliché “money talks and nonsense walks” came to fruition as the rural neo-businessmen (criminals) used their wealth to purchase political power.<sup>61</sup>

### **1. Economic Realm of DTO Pressure**

States with low development and high poverty are more susceptible to the secondary economy’s influences. For example, the dire Soviet economy encouraged the black market, where both government officials and criminals benefited through the informal economic structure.<sup>62</sup> DTOs gained legitimacy by providing an economic and social welfare to the impoverished population, therefore propelling the continued weakening of the state.

Some have argued the second economy is a subversive force that can lead to state failure. On the contrary, the second economy illustrates the role DTOs can play through

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<sup>57</sup> Marat, “Impact of Drug Trade,” 96.

<sup>58</sup> Jennifer S. Holmes, Sheila Amin Gutiérrez de Piñeres, and Kevin M. Curtin, “Drugs, Violence, and Development in Colombia: A Department-Level Analysis,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 48, no. 3 (2006): 158. Colombia’s authority is challenged from the secondary economy that is created with drug production and the monetary support of armed non-state actors.

<sup>59</sup> Francisco Thoumi, *Political Economy and Illegal Drugs in Colombia* (Boulder, CO: Lynn Rienner, 1995).

<sup>60</sup> Nazih Richani, “State Capacity in Postconflict Settings: Explaining Criminal Violence in El Salvador and Guatemala,” *Civil Wars* 12, no. 4 (2010): 431.

<sup>61</sup> Marat, “Impact of Drug Trade,” 94. The nature of the drug trade allowed for rapid accumulation of wealth amidst the reduced state capacity of the former Soviet Union.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

balancing inefficiencies and shortfalls in state capacity.<sup>63</sup> Patrick Meehan makes the argument that in the case of Burma, drug trafficking actually has created an environment that can lead to increased SC. Meehan argues, “the drug trade has provided the state with an array of incentives (legal impunity, protection, money laundering) and threats (of prosecution) with which to co-opt and coerce insurgent groups over which it has otherwise commanded little authority.”<sup>64</sup> In this sense, corruption and blackmail are the foundations of the state’s ability to gain a monopoly on the legitimate use of force and to use its institutional capabilities to tax the population.<sup>65</sup> Therefore, DTOs are not seeking to overthrow governments, but they are attempting to leverage economic state capacity deficiencies in their favor.

## 2. Political Realm of DTO Pressure

The effects that DTOs have on a state’s political legitimacy are inherently linked to the secondary economy (i.e., black market). DTOs use the monetary power gained through the illicit markets to corrupt government officials and gain access to the state’s political realm. Corruption targets law enforcement agents, legal representatives, political positions, and any other state institution in which a bribe can be advantageous to DTO activities.<sup>66</sup> DTOs use corruption to bribe government officials in order to solidify state political influence through local elections.<sup>67</sup> Once criminal organizations are involved with politics, the state’s ability to combat criminal activities is further weakened. Corrupt politicians are known to use the authority of the state for their own self-interests.<sup>68</sup> For example, the head of a Kyrgyz parliamentary committee on organized crime from 2000–

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<sup>63</sup> Andrew G. Walder, ed., *The Waning of the Communist State: Economic Origins of Political Decline in China and Hungary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), <http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft5g50071k/>, 62.

<sup>64</sup> Patrick Meehan, “Drugs, Insurgency and State-building in Burma: Why the Drugs Trade Is Central to Burma’s Changing Political Order,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 42, no. 3 (2011): 376–404.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Marat, “Impact of Drug Trade,” 94.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

2005 was a renowned gangster.<sup>69</sup> Another example is Pablo Escobar's election to Colombia's house of representatives in 1982.<sup>70</sup>

Additional literature looks at the relationship between states and DTPs. For example, researchers conducted an analysis on SC and its effect on drug trafficking by comparing Ghana and Guinea-Bissau in West Africa. According to the World Bank's Country Performance Institutional Assessment (CPIA) Quality of Public Administration indicators, Ghana's SC was higher than Guinea-Bissau's in 2005. Ghana's higher SC resulted in more drug seizures than in neighboring Guinea-Bissau.<sup>71</sup> Some scholars postulate that interdiction efforts have failed because the more governments try to interdict supplies, the more profits stabilize or increase, and this keeps the incentive high actually encouraging trafficking instead of deterring it.<sup>72</sup> In addition, supply-based counternarcotic efforts can lead to multiple secondary and tertiary effects. For instance, Phillip Coffin and Jeremy Bigwood claim that the current U.S. drug policies result in human rights violations, support of nondemocratic regimes, fosters an image of the U.S. as a bullying hypocrite, and leads to environmental damage caused by eradication efforts.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Tynychbek Akmatbayev served as a parliamentarian until his murder during a gang-related riot in 2005. Marat, "Impact of Drug Trade," 98.

<sup>70</sup> Pablo Escobar was the infamous Colombian drug lord. Pablo purchased the seat by taking advantage of poor economic conditions where voters were willing to take handouts in exchange for political support. He gained political support through the poor by "building football fields and sports facilities, supporting health and education programs and even building a whole neighborhood." Jacob Stringer, "Profiles: Pablo Escobar," Colombia Reports, January 8, 2013, <http://colombiareports.com/pablo-escobar/>.

<sup>71</sup> Steven E. Bury, "Analysis of West African Drug Trafficking: The Dynamics of Interdiction and State Capacity" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2011), 7.

<sup>72</sup> Interdiction efforts have failed to this point, and it is a result of the drug trafficking business feedback loop. The feedback loop negates any interdiction efforts by "stabilizing price and street supply." Governments are limited in their abilities to respond to increasing drug trafficking. The relationship is that the more governments try to interdict supplies, the more profits stabilize or increase and this keeps the incentive high to continue trafficking instead of deterring it. Thomas B. Fowler, "The International Narcotic Trade: Can It Be Stopped by Interdiction?," *Journal of Policy Modeling* 18, no. 3 (1995): 234.

<sup>73</sup> The \$2.3 billion Western Hemisphere Drug Elimination Act's goal was to reduce drug trafficking by 80 percent, but the results lead to more cocaine trafficking at cheaper prices. Phillip Coffin and Jeremy Bigwood, "Coca Eradication," *Foreign Policy in Focus* 6, no. 7 (2005): 1-4.

### 3. Social Realm of DTO Pressure

Last, the social ills associated with drug trafficking result in increased violence, addiction, disease, and strains on the security and judicial state institutions. Violence is the metric largely associated with increasing DTO activities; however, several scholars equate increases in violence to other variables. For example, Jennifer Holmes makes the argument that violence in Colombia is not due specifically to coca production, but it is due to economic factors and coca *eradication* efforts.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, several scholars argue that violence is not tied specifically to coca production but to a myriad of SC issues, including political, economic, and human capital issues. For example, inequality and violence are directly related (i.e., inequality goes up as violence goes up); however, when human capital variables, such as “conditions of life, GINI index, and levels of education” are considered, there is an inverse relationship.<sup>75</sup>

Finally, some scholars link increasing levels of violence to drug enforcement policies. According to Horace A. Bartilow, “Drug enforcement and violent crime in Latin America are endogenously related.”<sup>76</sup> He claims the rise in violence in Latin America is a result of increased U.S. drug enforcement policies related to U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) interdiction and trafficker immobilization operations.<sup>77</sup> In contrast, other scholars focus on the relationship between SC and violence. For instance, Nazih Richani supports the inverse relationship between SC and violence levels (i.e., as SC goes down, violence goes up). According to Nazih Richani, decreased SC leads to a “systemic relationship interlocking states’ agents and criminal organizations in a modality that

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<sup>74</sup> Holmes, Amin Gutiérrez de Piñeres, and Curtin, “Drugs, Violence, and Development,” 1.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>76</sup> Horace A. Bartilow and Kihong Eom, “Busting Drugs While Paying with Crime: The Collateral Damage of U.S. Drug Enforcement in Foreign Countries,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5, no. 2 (2009): 93–95, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1743-8594.2009.00085.x/full>.

<sup>77</sup> U.S. policies, which are backed by high levels of SC in terms of economic and security resources, are contributing to the high levels of crime and violence in drug producing and shipping countries. Bartilow and Eom, “Busting Drugs.”

perpetuates high rates of homicides.”<sup>78</sup> This thesis argues that increasing DTPs combined with low SC will result in higher violence rates.

### **C. DEPENDENT VARIABLE: STATE LEGITIMACY**

My dependent variable is state legitimacy. State legitimacy (SL) is a perception based on the resulting interaction between the independent variables (IVs) SC and DTP. There are several factors that influence a population’s perception of SL. First, the strength of the SC affects the populations’ perception of SL. Second, a state’s national identity and heritage influences SL.

Legitimacy is both vertical and horizontal and directly related to a state’s strength. Vertical legitimacy refers to the population’s acceptance of the state’s rule over them.<sup>79</sup> According to Ohlson and Soderberg, “vertical legitimacy establishes the connection...between society and political institutions and regimes.”<sup>80</sup> When vertical legitimacy is low, social mobilization may occur to reestablish an agreed upon right to rule.<sup>81</sup> Horizontal legitimacy refers to the interactions of different groups within society, political participation of these groups, and their ability to accept and tolerate each other.<sup>82</sup> When tolerance and participation is high, then horizontal legitimacy is high.<sup>83</sup> There will be a legitimacy gap when a difference occurs between expectations of what the government is supposed to provide, according to the social contract, and what the state is willing to provide.<sup>84</sup>

Understanding the nature of the state and its national identity can help determine the legitimacy of a state. For example, patrimonialism in post-colonial states creates

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<sup>78</sup> Nazih Richani, “State Capacity in Postconflict Settings: Explaining Criminal Violence in El Salvador and Guatemala,” *Civil Wars* 12, no. 4 (2010): 431, doi: 10.1080/13698249.2010.534630.

<sup>79</sup> Thomas Ohlson and Mimmi Soderberg, *From Intra-State War to Democratic Peace in Weak States* (Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, 2002), 7.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 8.

legitimacy issues. Legitimacy is questionable in these weakened states because it is based on the patrimonial network of its leaders.<sup>85</sup> People who are not part of this network become disenfranchised as the state's interests are indistinguishable from those of the elites in power.<sup>86</sup> Patrimonialism has plagued the institutional capacities of states in Latin America, particularly Haiti, as those in power are focused on their short-term survival instead of long-term growth and development of the country. The ideological and institutional weaknesses of patrimonial states forces leaders to focus on simply maintaining legitimacy through their patron-client networks instead of “constructing national identities, creating legitimacy, and providing security and other services” through the provision of public goods (social contract).<sup>87</sup>

I will be measuring SL according to how the case study countries' populations perceive certain variables according to in-country surveys. The Latin American Public Opinion Surveys (LAPOP) quantify SL measured by support for stable democracy, corruption, and perception of physical security. These variables account for different nuances in both the vertical and horizontal realms referred to by Soderberg.

The literature provides methods to measure SC and its ability to combat the negative effects of DTPs on SL. In addition, the governance indicators and SECFOR rates provide SC measurements whose effectiveness can predict whether SL will be low or high when facing increasing DTPs. The dependent variables of crime, corruption, and clearance rates are assessed through regional comparisons in the Caribbean and Central America.

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 11.

## D. THEORY

Table 1 depicts the relationship between different DTPs and SC levels and the corresponding SL statuses.

Table 1. State Legitimacy Status

		DRUG TRAFFICKING PRESSURES (DTPs)	
		Low	High
STATE CAPACITY (SC)	Low	Vulnerable	Narco-State
	High	Stable	Under Siege

DTP has a negative impact on SL, while SC has a positive impact on SL. That is, when DTP increases, SL decreases if SC is unable to combat the negative DTP impacts. Two variables affect SL: DTPs and SC. DTP and SC are the independent variables (IVs), while SL is the dependent variable (DV). The equation  $DTP+SC=SL$  provides four state statuses in regard to SL. First, when DTP and SC is low, SL status is *vulnerable*. Second, when there is high DTP and low SC, SL status is a *narco-state*. Third, when there is low DTP and high SC, SL status is a *stable* state. Fourth, when DTP and SC is high, SL status is a *state under siege*.

A vulnerable state lacks certain state capabilities to provide public goods. For example, law enforcement and rule of law capacity will struggle to prevent or prosecute criminal activity. The country suffers from high crime rates and low conviction rates. Further, infrastructural problems persist with inadequate transportation and communication networks. These circumstances are a cause for, or result of poor economic conditions. Last, corruption rates are high. Increasing DTPs will push a vulnerable state into a narco-state, which shares the same characteristics. A stable state provides public goods for its citizens through reliable security forces, proper

infrastructure that encourages economic growth and development, and rule of law. The public can expect police officers to apprehend criminals, the judicial system to prosecute and convict the guilty, which leads to lower levels of systemic corruption. A state under siege has the same characteristics, except it faces higher DTPs. Its SC levels are lower than a stable state's, although it is able to maintain current levels. A stalemate occurs with the state's ability to combat DTPs until SC improves or foreign assistance arrives. Viewed as a spectrum, SL status from low to high can be measured according to survey criteria percentages. For example, SL percentages broken into quarter percentiles are as follows:

- 0–25% = narco-state,
- 26–50% = state under siege,
- 51–75% = vulnerable state, and
- 76–100% = stable state.

The difference between a state under siege and vulnerable state is the presence of DTPs, and it can quickly take a turn for the worse.

In addition, U.S. influence is relevant for improved SC and decreasing DTO activities in a region. It is relevant because it provides technical and economic assistance in developing domestic institutions resulting in a better SL status.

#### **E. ALTERNATE HYPOTHESES**

There are several alternate hypotheses that could explain the variation of SL apart from the two I am studying. The first is cultural influences. A country's culture, or colonial heritage, could explain different corruption levels. For example, English colonies tend to be less corrupt than Spanish colonies because Spanish conquistadores' patrimonial institutional effects are the root cause of customary corruption in Latin America, while the English colonies' tended to implant institutions based on rule of law. Thus, if a country is a former Spanish colony, then it is more likely to be more corrupt, which opens avenues for DTPs' negative impacts on SL. Corruption is a result of low SC failing to combat the effects of DTPs.

The second alternate hypothesis is geography. Geography is the main contributor to weak state capacity in the region. The Caribbean and Central America's proximity to the world's largest consumer of narcotics (the United States) provides the monetary incentive for governments and their populations to cooperate. The logic here is that colonial history or institutions do not matter; rather, what matters is that these countries are within drug trafficking pathways. This structural argument predicts that because of states' geographic region, drug trafficking will remain high and impact states, independent of domestic institutional development, and U.S. influence.<sup>88</sup>

The third alternate hypothesis is the economy. When the economy is strong, the incentive to cooperate, condone, or participate in illicit activities decreases. During the 1970s, Latin American countries relied on debt-led growth.<sup>89</sup> The economic reliance on external finance for Latin American countries became a devastating policy during the 1980s. Faced with hyperinflation, low investment, and increasing uncertainty, many people found they could earn money through the increased drug trade in the Caribbean.<sup>90</sup> The logic here is that institutions, geography, and cultural history do not matter regarding DTPs; all that matters is the state of the economy. This argument predicts an inverse relationship between the economy and drug trafficking, whereby strong economies with growth and development should see a decrease in drug trafficking.

## **F. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The objective of the research involves a combination of *heuristic* and *theory testing* case study approach. According to George and Bennett, "heuristic case studies inductively identify new variables, hypotheses, causal mechanisms, and causal paths."<sup>91</sup> For this reason, I have selected typical cases, or outliers, such as the Bahamas and

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<sup>88</sup> Elise Feron, "The Story of Drug Trafficking in Latin America," *Borderland Beat*, June 11, 2014, <http://www.borderlandbeat.com/2014/06/the-story-of-drug-trafficking-in-latin.html>.

<sup>89</sup> Robert N. Gwynne and Kay Cristobal, *Latin America Transformed: Globalization and Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 45.

<sup>90</sup> Feron, "The Story of Drug Trafficking."

<sup>91</sup> Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004), 75.

Nicaragua, which heuristically can help to identify which variables have allowed those countries to have more success against DTOs than their regional neighbors. In this vein, Nicaragua and the Bahamas are both heuristic, and they are strong initial tests of the argument given their high exposure to drug trafficking pressures. In addition, Haiti and Guatemala are juxtaposed as typical cases to depict the effects of having low SC and high DTPs on SL status. According to John Gerring, a typical-case method is “most representative on whatever causal dimensions are of interest.”<sup>92</sup> For this study, Haiti is an example of how low SC faltered in the presence of increasing DTPs, resulting in a narco-state SL status.

*Theory testing* case studies “assess the validity and scope conditions of single or competing theories.”<sup>93</sup> I will test the cases using J. S. Mill’s *most-similar* testing method to determine the differing variables between two sets of countries in the Caribbean and Central America. Haiti and the Bahamas are both Caribbean, with predominantly African populations, non-Spanish colonies, and island nations, exposing them to similar pressures, but with different levels of state legitimacy. In Central America, Guatemala and Nicaragua are geographically, culturally, and historically similar, yet they diverge in levels of state legitimacy.

For this research, SC is measured in terms of the World Bank’s aggregate governance indicators and SECFOR rates. SECFOR SC is indicative of expected levels of violence (homicide rates), clearance rates, and corruption. With consistent DTPs, determining differences in SCs between different countries in a region can predict SL statuses. SL statuses will be measured according to perceptions recorded from in-country surveys.

The Bahamas use the *least-likely* case logic to identify SC variables that contributed to suppression of DTO activities, despite being subjected to similar circumstance as Haiti during the 1970s to 2005. According to John Gerring, the *least-*

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<sup>92</sup> John Gerring, *Social Science Methodology: A Criterial Framework* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 219.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

*likely* research design looks for a case that “reveals a result that is unexpected in light of the causal inference under investigation...a least-likely case is shown to be positive (with respect to the predicted outcome).”<sup>94</sup> For the Bahamas, I am looking to see why it was able to combat DTPs while Haiti could not, therefore resulting in a higher SL status for the Bahamian government. Those variables could include different policy choices contributing to more SC, increased coordination with U.S. drug enforcement operations, or another variable that has allowed it to effectively reduce DTO activities.

The *most-similar* case logic is also be used between the countries of Nicaragua and Guatemala. According to George and Bennett, the most-similar case design, “aims to isolate the difference in the observed outcomes as due to the influence of variance in the single independent variable.”<sup>95</sup> The independent variable for assessment is state capacity. I will look at both countries’ SC during the same timeframes leading up to the drug supply route shift from the Caribbean to Central America in the 1990s. Determining the SC of each country will assist in explaining how Nicaragua, despite experiencing similar economic and political turmoil, is not impacted by DTPs like its neighbors.

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid. 220.

<sup>95</sup> George and Bennett, *Case Studies*, 81.

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## II. HAITI, THE BAHAMAS, AND THE UNITED STATES AS THE WILD CARD

In February 2016, Haiti's political crisis came to a boil as President Michel Martelly stepped down, leaving the office to be filled by a provisional president.<sup>96</sup> The political turmoil is a result of violent public "protests and deep public suspicions about vote rigging in favor of Martelly's chosen successor."<sup>97</sup> The October 2015 election is the cause for the latest political turmoil. The 54 candidates who ran claim the process was riddled with fraud and corruption so that Martelly's chosen successor would win. The public outcry is a display of Haiti's overall SC deficiencies that were wiped out after the 2010 earthquake, but really it is a reflection of Haiti's troubled history. Furthermore, the threat of armed violence due to highly inefficient SECFOR, could lead to widespread bloodshed reminiscent of the Duvalier regime's political purges.<sup>98</sup>

Conversely, the Bahamas is a country whose SECFOR SC has largely improved due to combined anti-narcotics efforts with the United States. The joint task force Operation Bahamas, Turks, and Caicos (OPBAT) seized \$2.5 million worth of drugs in one weekend in September, 2015.<sup>99</sup> OPBAT is the epitome of successful SECFOR SC working among various agencies to combat drug trafficking in the Bahamas and United States. OPBAT also demonstrates the Bahamas' decision to combat DTPs and improve SECFOR SC; this is a break away from its corrupt and troubled smuggling past.

Drug trafficking is a business, and arguably, the most important aspect when determining how to run a business is location. During the 1970s, the Caribbean was the main supply route connecting the drug producing countries in South America to the

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<sup>96</sup> Associated Press, "Provisional President Elected in Haiti," *New York Times*, February 15, 2016, [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/15/world/americas/provisional-president-elected-in-haiti.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/15/world/americas/provisional-president-elected-in-haiti.html?_r=0).

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Frances Robles, "Michel Martelly, Haiti's President, Departs without a Successor," *New York Times*, February 8, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/08/world/americas/michel-martelly-haitis-president-departs-without-a-successor.html?smprod=nytcore-iphone>.

<sup>99</sup> "Coast Guard Assists in \$2.5 Million Drug Bust in the Bahamas," *Coast Guard News*, September 9, 2015, <http://coastguardnews.com/coast-guard-assists-in-2-5-million-drug-bust-in-the-bahamas/2015/09/09/>.

consumers in the United States and Europe.<sup>100</sup> The permeable coastlines throughout the area allowed DTOs to expand their activities throughout the 1980s. Drug trafficking brought additional pressures to the Caribbean that challenged states' capacities; however, not all countries within the geographic drug supply routes have been affected the same way.

Two countries caught in the geographical crosshairs of the drug cartel shipping lanes are Haiti and the Bahamas. The two countries are only separated by 531 miles, yet their response to increasing DTPs after their entrance into the region in the 1970s–1980s has been different. The differences in SC between the two countries account for the different SL statuses present today; Haiti is a narco-state, and the Bahamas is a state under siege battling to become *stable*. Prior to the entrance of drugs into the region, Haiti's SL status was *vulnerable* (low DTP and SC). The influence of increasing DTPs and low SC in Haiti's caused SL to plummet. Haiti rapidly succumbed to the effects of drug trafficking as its low SC could not combat increasing DTPs, pushing it from a *vulnerable* SL status to that of a narco-state. Once Haiti's SL status became a narco-state, it served as the drug trafficking window to the Caribbean.

The question is why is Haiti's SC unable to combat the effects of increasing DTPs while the Bahamas did? I argue that Haiti's patrimonial, race-based, ideological influences have resulted in ineffective institutions and overall low SL. Conversely, the Bahamas' willingness to improve its SECFOR SC, combined with support from the United States, results in higher SL.

In this chapter, I investigate this argument as follows. First, I discuss how Haiti's ideology and institutional influences have resulted in low state capacity. Second, I discuss the Bahamas' troubled past and the decisions that resulted in different SC as compared to Haiti. Finally, I compare and explain the divergent levels of state legitimacy between

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<sup>100</sup> The Caribbean's 15,000 square miles provide geographic safe havens for drug traffickers. With over 700 islands, most uninhabited, the Caribbean archipelago is a significant obstacle to governments seeking to combat DTO activities. "The CARICOM Blueprint for Illicit Drug Trafficking," Council on Hemispheric Affairs, December 28, 2011, <http://www.coha.org/the-caricom-blueprint-for-illicit-drug-trafficking/>.

Haiti and the Bahamas as a function of drug trafficking pressures and level of state capacity.

**A. HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS AND INSTITUTIONAL LEGACY OF HAITI AND THE BAHAMAS**

Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, modern states have come to be defined by the historical origins of their institutions. This means that it matters which country colonized the modern state, because institutional influences in British versus Spanish colonies equates to differences in culture, rule of law, and governance. Among the numerous institutional influences Spain brought to Latin America and the Caribbean, patrimonialism is arguably one of the most difficult to overcome. Patrimonialism is defined as “a form of political domination in which authority rests on the personal and bureaucratic power exercised by a royal household, where that power is formally arbitrary and under the direct control of the ruler.”<sup>101</sup> According to Ben Stavis,

the limitation of patrimonialism...is that it was inherently unstable, tending to be subject to political upheavals, which arose from the emergence of rival centers of power. Since historically patrimonial systems were usually replaced by further patrimonial systems, their existence is seen as a barrier to any sustained economic and social transformation.<sup>102</sup>

Weber’s definition of patrimonialism also depicts it as “a continuous struggle of the central power with various centrifugal powers.”<sup>103</sup> Since independence from Spain and the birth of the nation state, the centrifugal challengers to central power come in the form of non-state actors, such as DTOs.

The definition and description of patrimonialism helps to explain the incessant struggles of many Latin American and Caribbean countries to overcome growth and development issues. Moreover, patrimonialism permeates every facet of society and leads

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<sup>101</sup> “Patrimonialism,” s.v. *Encyclopedia.com*, 1998, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-patrimonialism.html>.

<sup>102</sup> Ben Stavis, “Notes on Max Weber’s Patrimonial System” Temple University, September 1999, <http://astro.temple.edu/~bstavis/courses/442patrimonial-system.htm>.

<sup>103</sup> Richard Swedberg, *The Max Weber Dictionary: Key Words and Central Concepts* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 195.

to levels of corruption in government that seem insurmountable. Non-state actors, such as DTOs, exacerbate the situation by malignantly spreading corruption to benefit their illicit activities. Thus, Latin America is plagued by institutional influences that operated on a privilege-based system wherein rule of law is superseded by corruption and the highest paying bribe. Haiti is a prime example of how patrimonialism corrodes a state. The following discussion explores the history of Haiti, the mulatto ideology, Papa Duvalier, and the undermining of state capacity.

## **B. HAITI BACKGROUND**

Haiti is a victim of its past, and its attempts to break with that past have led to repeated revolutions and coups. According to several authors, the cause of the social upheaval is related to its colonial and post-independence struggles with race. After the Haitian revolution (1791–1803), the newly formed nation dealt with successive presidents who used mulatto ideology to govern. The mulatto ideology is based on patrimonialism, racism, and self-proclaimed privileges that mulattos presume to own based on their genealogy.<sup>104</sup> If a person is considered a mulatto, then a certain social standing is associated with that label. It is the social standing and privileges that caused mulattos to take action to protect their “rights,” while at the same time denying access to education and political office for the rest of the population.<sup>105</sup>

The mulatto ideology has evolved in three distinct historical stages. The first stage is the war of liberation against France that established a “consciousness of identity based on race and a sense of a collective mission.”<sup>106</sup> The enlightenment’s ideas (nationalism, liberty, and reason) motivated the army and ruling elites to revolt, but “the praxis of the Black masses in the enterprise of liberation was motivated by an outlook and value

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<sup>104</sup> Like most caudillo-led countries in Latin America, Haiti’s leaders prioritized self-enrichment and personal privileges amongst the select few elite over the prosperity of the nation. Ruben Titus claims the mulatto ideology is the cause for all of Haiti’s social and political travails. Rubens F. Titus, *Roadmap to Haiti’s Next Revolution: A Plan for Diaspora Haitians to Contribute to a Peaceful Turnaround* (Bloomington: Universe, Inc., 2012), 12.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Asselin Charles, “Ainsi Parla L’Oncle and the Construction of the Haitian Ideology,” *Haiti Then and Now*, October 1, 2014, <http://www.haitithenandnowhtn.com/search/label/Haitian%20Ideology>.

system that were recognizably African.”<sup>107</sup> Therefore, the first stage of Haiti’s race-based ideology is one of confusion; the elites used the enlightenment’s nationalistic tenets to mobilize the population, but the different races did not share the same values or ideals after the revolution ended.

A shift in ideology to the second stage occurred with President Jean-Pierre Boyer. President Boyer fractured the population who had collaborated to defeat the French by agreeing to pay an indemnity to France for lost properties in 1825. Haiti agreed to pay for France’s plantations and slave-run business ventures that it lost in the war.<sup>108</sup> The population felt betrayed and that the indemnity went against everything they had fought for during the wars of independence.<sup>109</sup>

After Boyer ruptured the Haitian ideology, a long period of “incoherence” ensued that resulted in factions being played against one another by the international Great Powers (Great Britain, France, and Germany) and from domestic sources as well.<sup>110</sup> Some examples include the acceptance of the Vatican’s Concordant in 1860, which made Catholicism the official Haitian religion while “legitimizing the suppression of Voodoo and other traditional beliefs.”<sup>111</sup> Next, the French education system was imported and managed by French teachers. This assured an ideological shift with Haiti’s youth toward European-based thinking or logic. The “incoherence” period solidified the rift between European-based lineages and customs at the expense of African ones.

A wave of nationalism authorized by elite nationalist progressives swept through the country as they attempted to redefine a Haitian identity. The progressives attempted to redefine the myth of origin based on an African identity forged through the revolution for independence. In the end, these nationalists kept looking to Europe as the ideal template on which to base their identities and institutions (this is very similar to problems

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

in South America's post-independence political struggles as factions between European elitism battled with rural caudillismo). The ideology became an "Afro-Latin enclave in the Caribbean."<sup>112</sup> According to Asselin Charles, "the ideological incoherence translated into political delinquency," and a seemingly permanent fracture between mulattos and blacks.<sup>113</sup> This fracture is the origin of weak state capacity in Haiti.

The fracture resulted in constant political turmoil and economic woes that led to a series of revolutions from 1843 until 1915. For example, according to Digital History, "Haiti had experienced 102 revolts, wars, or coups; only one of the country's 22 presidents had served a complete term, and merely four died of natural causes."<sup>114</sup> Spector explains:

From 1843 until 1915, Haiti endured thirty-two heads of state. Riviere-Herard, the mulatto set up by the *elite* to replace Boyer, was overthrown in 1844 by the Negro army, instituting Negro control of the presidency for the entire period from 1844 until 1915, with the exception of Geffard, Salnave, Boisronde-Canal, and Hippolyte. Guerriere stayed in power eleven months, his successor Pierrot eleven months, Riche less than a year. Soulouque, Domingue, Boisronde-Canal, Salomon, Legitime, Alexis, Simon, Oreste, Zamor, and Theodore were deposed by revolution; Salnave was tied to a pole and shot; Hippolyte died in office; Leconte was blown up in his palace; Auguste died by poison; Simon Sam retired under pressure; and Jean Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, the last of the presidents prior to the American Intervention in 1915, was torn to pieces by a mob in Port-au-Prince after murdering one hundred and sixty-seven of his political enemies in a prison blood-bath.<sup>115</sup>

The revolutions and political turmoil served to further undermine state capacity, which culminated when a mob murdered President Vilbrun Guillaume Sam.<sup>116</sup> After 72 years of

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> "Intervention in Haiti."

<sup>115</sup> Robert M. Spector, *W. Cameron Forbes and the Hoover Commissions to Haiti, 1930* (Landham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 13.

<sup>116</sup> Digital History, "Intervention in Haiti."

political unrest and the erosion of SC, the U.S. sent Marines to restore order and establish political and economic stability.<sup>117</sup>

The invasion by the United States solidified factions as the elite distanced themselves from the “New World African, Creole speaking, and Voodoo practicing masses,” therefore continuing the erosion of SC.<sup>118</sup> Lacking an ideology to rally the masses, the elite were forced to the sidelines as the rest of the population resisted the occupation through open conflict and guerilla style tactics.<sup>119</sup> The elite were content to take a backseat as the black masses fought U.S. forces, even though the elite viewed the U.S. occupation as a threat, since U.S. infrastructural improvements during the occupation offered a stepping-stone for the middle class to rise. For example, the military “built major roads, introduced automatic telephones in Port-au-Prince, constructed bridges, dredged harbors, erected schools, established clinics, and undertook other previously neglected public works.”<sup>120</sup> A rising middle class might mobilize and overthrow the sociopolitical structure that allowed the mulattos to maintain control over the black masses; this is an option the elite found unacceptable.

Even after the U.S. military occupation in 1915, the elite continued to focus on ensuring their social status and political power by denying equality to the masses. The mulattos would politically block access to government jobs, mostly due to their literate capabilities as compared to the illiterate black masses.<sup>121</sup> In addition, blocking access to

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<sup>117</sup> Spector, *W. Cameron Forbes*, 13; Digital History, “Intervention in Haiti.”

<sup>118</sup> David Nicholls, “Ideology and Political Protest in Haiti, 1930–46,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 9, no. 4 (1974): 6.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>120</sup> According to the Cameron Forbes Commission in 1930, “This group, which is proud to be known as the ‘Elite,’ forms the governing class. It is an urban group, comprising a very small proportion of the population, probably less than five percent, generally mulatto but shading from octoroon to black, and because it is educated, comparatively wealthy and highly privileged with leadership, this class is as careful in maintaining its caste distinction as any other ruling class...They see in the rise of a middle class a threat to the continuation of their own leadership.” Titus, *Roadmap*, 15–16; “Haiti: Growth and Structure of the Economy,” Country Studies, accessed April 7, 2016, <http://countrystudies.us/haiti/45.htm>.

<sup>121</sup> Charles, “Ainsi Parla L’Oncle.”

education became a controlling social tool and strategy to maintain mulatto control and power, therefore continuing to undermine SC.<sup>122</sup>

### 1. Norisme, Ideology, and the Building of the Haitian State

Amidst the confusion and disagreement on a way ahead, Price-Mars published the *Ainsi parla l'Oncle*, which defined the Haitian ideology based on “scientific observation of the people’s history, cultural practices, and world view.”<sup>123</sup> According to Charles Asselin, *l'Oncle* “reconfigured the Haitian psychospace, provided a sociologically sound framework for the construction of a collective identity and self-representation, and constructed an ethical framework legitimizing the place of the masses at the center of the national ideology.”<sup>124</sup> *L'Oncle's* ideas were an accepted and accurate depiction representing Haitian culture and society.

The *Ainsi parla l'Oncle* influenced several writers and three protest movements that helped shape the Haitian ideology during the U.S. occupation: *Norisme*, Marxism, and technocratic socialism. *Norisme* is the most important because it gained traction and was actually implemented. *Noiriste* writers “developed a political theory on the basis of their biological, psychological and social ideas.”<sup>125</sup> In the 1930s, the writers focused on creating an ideology that traced lineages to Africa based on blood, not cultural ties to Europe based on colonization and slavery. *Noriste* writers focused on the importance of the masses, the poor, and how they were the pillars of society. These writers argued against democracy and liberalism, and they wanted to have a “strong black dictatorship, exercised in the interests of the masses.”<sup>126</sup> Francois Duvalier borrowed from these ideas during the 1946 election.

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<sup>122</sup> Titus, *Roadmap*, 13–14. Blocking access to education was not a new tactic. The initial presidencies of Jean-Jacques Dessalines (Haiti’s first head of state), Henry Christophe, and Jean-Pierre Boyer, battled with the issues of ensuring public education for the former slave Black masses against the elites’ desires. Charles, “Ainsi Parla L’Oncle.”

<sup>123</sup> Charles, “Ainsi Parla L’Oncle.”

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Nicholls, “Ideology and Political Protest in Haiti, 1930–46,” 7.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

The 1946 election put *noirisme* to the forefront as the state's ideology, along with Duvalier. The noiriste victory allowed for the growth of the middle class, something the U.S. occupiers wanted to have happen in order to close the inequality gaps and bring about political stability in the area.<sup>127</sup> Francois Duvalier saw the middle-class as the means to implement his own ideology: Duvalierism.

The political ideology referred to as Duvalierism is the expression of centuries of struggles between Haiti's colonial social classes.<sup>128</sup> In this light, it is a conservative ideology that uses the racial tensions between blacks and mulattos as a mobilizing factor.<sup>129</sup> The ideology ties all of Haiti's social problems to the historical fracture between the mulatto-dominated bourgeoisie and the black middle class attempting to rise up from slavery's shackles.<sup>130</sup>

"Papa Doc" Duvalier's ideology is based on several factors. First, it is pro-black. Second, it relies on the elite's high intellectual, moral, and cultural characteristics to lead the nation toward progress and prosperity.<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, the elite were required to assimilate Haitian identities with Western customs. The elite's previous focus on Europe's contributions to society at the expense of Africa's contribution is the source of the "Haitian problem."<sup>132</sup> In this light, an entire sector of the population's ancestral and historical linkages is ignored.<sup>133</sup> Duvalier sought to quell the racial fractures through his pledge to create a government based on national unity instead of race.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>128</sup> Anselme Remy, "The Duvalier Phenomenon," *Caribbean Studies* 14, no. 2 (1974): 41–42.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 55.

## 2. Duvalier, Ideology, and State Capacity

How does ideology undermine state capacity? Duvalier's ideology led to economic policies that negated the positive effects from the U.S. occupation and foreign aid.<sup>135</sup> For example, "Haiti was the only country in the world that did not experience real economic growth for most of the 1950s and the 1960s, a period when the world economy expanded at its most rapid rate in history."<sup>136</sup> Essentially, Haiti was plagued by archaic economic structures from the colonial period; there were no economic institutional improvements after independence.<sup>137</sup> In turn, this weakened what we consider core state functions, such as providing public goods. Without economic relief, Haiti resorted to seeking foreign assistance and investment.

Next, Duvalier advocated a cultural policy that encouraged acceptance of all African-based traditions while maintaining an affinity towards European culture as a symbol of social status. People who spoke French, practiced European customs, or had items from Europe were regarded as in a higher class.<sup>138</sup> Despite the emphasis on accepting African culture, the middle class became discouraged with the perceived European cultural superiority. Additionally, the disenfranchised middle class became a threat that was violently repressed; the result is that the U.S. discontinued foreign assistance. As the economy slowed and the U.S. avoided intervention, state capacity deteriorated, increasing the need for Duvalier's regime to rely on security forces to maintain his position through repression.<sup>139</sup> As such, state violence became the vehicle to implement Duvalierism, affecting every household. According to Remy, "almost every Haitian has had some friend who has been imprisoned or murdered, lost his property or

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<sup>135</sup> After the withdrawal of troops in 1934, Haiti's economy still experienced growth into the 1950s with the assistance of favorable worldwide prices for its exports (country studies Haiti). The financial policies and advice the U.S. provided proves that even a country like Haiti could experience economic growth after decades of turmoil. Unfortunately, once the U.S. advisors left, Haiti reverted back to its patrimonial ways under President Francois Duvalier. "Haiti: Growth and Structure of the Economy."

<sup>136</sup> "Haiti: Growth and Structure of the Economy."

<sup>137</sup> Remy, "The Duvalier Phenomenon," 58.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

been forced into exile.”<sup>140</sup> Once opponents were eliminated, economic woes continued to limit the ability of the ideology, and the state associated with it, to move forward.

Duvalier’s legacy is a country in which institutionalized corruption and personal patronage was supported by security forces and the military loyal to his regime.<sup>141</sup> The patronage system benefited the select few of his regime while the poor masses were left to fend for themselves. The situation depleted Haiti’s human capital through human flight and brain drain, one of the social and economic indicators used for the FSI and tangible evidence of weak governance.<sup>142</sup> Papa Doc Duvalier’s violent and corrupt legacy continued to plague the country when his son took over.

Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier succeeded his father in 1971 and continued to deepen institutional corruption while mismanaging economic development.<sup>143</sup> He did open the country to foreign businesses, which directly led to an increase of aid from the U.S.<sup>144</sup> The problem is that Baby Doc and his cronies executed a robust embezzlement and corruption scheme that deprived the Haitian people from the foreign aid benefits. For example, in 1980 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave Haiti 22 million dollars and all but two million of it vanished.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>141</sup> “Haiti: Growth and Structure of the Economy.”

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> According to the Country Studies website, “Duvalierists engaged in drug trafficking, pilferage of development and food aid, illegal resale and export of subsidized oil, fraudulent lotteries, export of cadavers and blood plasma, manipulation of government contracts, tampering with pension funds, and skimming of budgeted funds.” Furthermore, a World Bank official named Marc Bazin investigated the corruption in Jean-Claude’s government and concluded, “36 percent of government revenue was embezzled, and declared the country the ‘most mismanaged in the region.’” The policy decisions under the Duvaliers is what allowed DTOs to take over the country and continue its weakening from within. “Haiti: Growth and Structure of the Economy.”

<sup>144</sup> Stephanie Hanes, “Jean-Claude Duvalier, ex-Haitian Leader Known as Baby Doc, Dies at 63,” *Washington Post*, October 4, 2014, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the\\_americas/jean-claude-duvalier-ex-haitian-leader-known-as-baby-doc-dies-at-63/2014/10/04/ecdaa2bc-4be3-11e4-b72e-d60a9229cc10\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the_americas/jean-claude-duvalier-ex-haitian-leader-known-as-baby-doc-dies-at-63/2014/10/04/ecdaa2bc-4be3-11e4-b72e-d60a9229cc10_story.html).

<sup>145</sup> Tim Stanley, “Baby Doc Duvalier, The Man Who Put a Curse on Haiti,” *Telegraph*, October 6, 2014, <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/timstanley/100288797/baby-doc-duvalier-the-man-who-put-a-curse-on-haiti/>.

The flamboyant and extravagant spending of Baby Docs' regime reached a boiling point when he married Michele Bennett, a similarly extravagant mulatto whose outlandish spending habits in the face of extreme poverty upset the black majority. The black majority viewed this marriage as a betrayal of Duvalierism's black-first ideology and saw his spouse as another stage of mulatto domination and influence.<sup>146</sup> Along with the political discord, socio-economic concerns plagued the country as AIDS became an epidemic, corruption skyrocketed, and drug trafficking increased—all while the regime continued to suppress dissent in the population through violence and torture.<sup>147</sup> The population responded by revolting, and this sent Baby Doc fleeing to France on February 7, 1986.<sup>148</sup>

Baby Doc left behind a country whose institutional state capacity was reduced in all aspects except its security forces, which operated on corruption and violence against the population it was supposed to protect. Haiti's corrupt culture and crippling ideologies weakened SC to a point where DTOs could infiltrate and run their illicit activities at will. Haiti's low SC combined with increasing DTPs resulting in a narco-state SL status.

### **3. The Tsunami of Drug Trafficking Reaches Haiti**

Increased Colombian DTO presence in Haiti is partially the result of successful supply-based eradication efforts by the U.S. In response, Colombian producers opened up the drug trade to non-Colombians in order to protect their supply-based endeavors from U.S. anti-drug assaults.<sup>149</sup> Colombian DTOs moved into the Caribbean like a cancerous growth, taking root, and then malignantly spreading to destabilize or take advantage of already weakened states. The increase in trafficking into Haiti occurred due to external pressures from Colombian state-led operations and to business pressures coming from Mexico. Haiti became lucrative to Colombians because the Mexican cartels demanded 50

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<sup>146</sup> Hanes, "Jean-Claude Duvalier."

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Daurius Figueira, *Cocaine and Heroin Trafficking in the Caribbean*, Vol. 2 (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, Inc., 2006), 198.

percent of the product destined for the United States.<sup>150</sup> Therefore, Haiti became the transshipment middle-ground for drug producing countries, like Columbia, shipping drugs to the U.S.

Drug trafficking's influence in Haiti has been a part of its long history. From 1970–1990, tons of drugs flowed through Haiti, which was used as a logistics stop for drugs on route to their final destination into the Dominican Republic or other areas of the Caribbean and United States. During this time, the military dictatorships became very wealthy and powerful as they were on the Colombian drug cartel (Medellin and Cali) payrolls.<sup>151</sup>

The military sought additional power, which resulted in a series of coups starting with the overthrow of the Duvalier dictatorship in 1988. In 1991, they overthrew President Jean Bertrand Aristide, who returned to power in 1994 and again in 2000.<sup>152</sup> From 1988–1994, “the military juntas, the police and the irregulars that served the elites of Haiti would descend into an orgy of blood letting let loose on a largely unarmed and powerless population.”<sup>153</sup> The influence of the Colombian drug traffickers came to fruition during the political purges by the military and police seeking to exterminate Aristide supporters. The government's attention was focused elsewhere, and this gave the Colombian DTOs an opportunity to plan and spread their roots and power over society.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 210.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 174.

<sup>152</sup> Figueira claims that the U.S. anti-drug war actually created the situation in Haiti that allowed the drug barons to prosper. The U.S. allowed the Aristide government to wither on the vine by choking them off with embargoes and stoppage of grants; it was a strategy “designed to produce the fertile social conditions that gave birth to instability and violence.” Figueira, *Cocaine and Heroin*, 502.

The U.S. agenda of removing Aristide actually played into the hands of the drug barons, who were able to solidify their position. The drug barons were given room by the U.S. to maneuver and overthrow Aristide, who was a thorn in their operations. Aristide's removal gave the DTOs the impunity and freedom to maneuver that they desired. This begins what the author calls Haiti's entrance into the narco democracies of the Caribbean. Figueira, *Cocaine and Heroin*, 511.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid. 186.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 149.

The Colombian drug cartels took advantage of the impoverished situation in Haiti and encouraged the constant struggle for power, which allowed them to operate their drug trade with relative impunity. Figueira claims that the drug lords have armed the slums, and in turn, their rural militias are a dominating social force that has wrestled power from the oligarchs and traditional elites: politicians, the military, and the police.<sup>155</sup> Haiti is now a failing state that does not have a single entity wielding a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. A failing state is an ideal environment for the DTOs to operate at will with little to no repercussions for their actions.

Haiti's political SC improved under President Préval (May 2006 to May 2011) as he sought to build institutions, create conditions for foreign direct investment, and job opportunities.<sup>156</sup> Furthermore, his administration met IMF debt relief steps, improved security through the support of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), improved the Haitian police force, pledged to establish rule of law, and supported cooperation in counternarcotic operations with the U.S.<sup>157</sup> The efforts to improve SC came to a crashing halt on January 12, 2010 when a 7.0 magnitude earthquake effectively destroyed any remaining SC that existed.

The earthquake shattered what little SC and infrastructure had existed in Haiti. Limited building codes resulted in infrastructure not built to withstand a natural disaster of such proportions, and many buildings were destroyed.<sup>158</sup> The limited institutional capacity remaining to respond and provide public goods, in terms of medical care, food aid, sanitation, and shelter was quickly overwhelmed.<sup>159</sup> The earthquake affected roughly

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>156</sup> Rhoda Margesson and Maureen Taft-Morales, *Haiti Earthquake: Crisis and Response* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2010), 18.

<sup>157</sup> Haiti's depleted security SC resulted in the UN stability mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in April 2004. Brazil took control in 2009 and had 1,284 troops when the earthquake hit. Margesson and Taft-Morales, *Haiti Earthquake*, 18–19.

<sup>158</sup> Richard Pallardy, "Haiti Earthquake of 2010," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed April 6, 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/event/Haiti-earthquake-of-2010>.

<sup>159</sup> Haitian officials could not document the dead, care for orphans, attend to the injured, nor properly dispose of the dead. Pallardy, "Haiti Earthquake of 2010."

three million people, or one third of the population, and left one million homeless. Due to Haiti's relatively nonexistent SC, a massive international aid response was launched.<sup>160</sup>

The international response is indicative of the complete destruction of what remained of Haiti's subtle SC. The UN led relief coordination efforts amongst participating nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private voluntary organizations (PVOs), and international government organizations (IGOs). In addition, the UN Security Council extended MINUSTAH's mission to October 2010, and it increased the military and police forces to 8,940 and 3,711 respectively.<sup>161</sup> Other support includes the various Red Cross units from several countries, the Organization of American States (OAS), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. DOD, and numerous humanitarian funding efforts.<sup>162</sup> Finally, international financial institutions pledged monetary support for recovery and reconstruction efforts while providing debt relief.<sup>163</sup>

As I discuss later, both the DTO pressures and weakened state capacity have worked to undermine state legitimacy. This has only been exacerbated by the natural disasters of earthquakes and deforestation that undermine the necessary strengthening of state capacity. As the state lacks legitimacy, Haiti's democratic future is in question, in spite of the resources being placed there by the United Nations (UN). Not all Caribbean countries have evolved equally. In the following section, I explore the case of the Bahamas, which has a different colonial legacy and higher state capacity than Haiti, but still has similar DTPs as Haiti. I illustrate that the Bahamas is a case wherein state legitimacy is high precisely because state capacity is able to hold back DTO pressure.

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<sup>160</sup> Margesson and Taft-Morales, *Haiti Earthquake*, 17–19.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>162</sup> The U.S. DOD assisted with 20,458 military members encompassing every branch of service. Margesson and Taft-Morales, *Haiti Earthquake*, 10–13.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

## C. THE BAHAMAS BACKGROUND

The Bahamas' geographic location and natural terrain features afford it a rich history of illicit activities going back to the age of piracy in the 1600s and 1700s.<sup>164</sup> The Bahamas' 100,000 miles of sea surrounding an archipelago of thousands of islands make it an ideal hiding place for anyone not wanting to be detected. These characteristics account for a long history of SC attempting to curtail periods of lawlessness and increasing illicit activities up through the present day's battles with drug trafficking. The Bahamas' colonial history under British rule accounts for the difference in SC that has enabled it to incessantly combatted illicit activities since the age of piracy.

### 1. Colonial SC

The initial proprietary government (an extractive colony) on the island failed to establish law and order for the British colony.<sup>165</sup> The inability to establish law and order led to a period of renowned piracy and seemingly governmental anarchy. In 1717, the British sent a military governor, Captain Woodes Rogers, to establish order, maintain the peace, and open the seas for peaceful and economically advantageous trade.<sup>166</sup> The increased security that the military provided allowed for relative increases in economic prosperity; however, the islands' geographic location and limited arable land made an agrarian based economy untenable.<sup>167</sup>

Without an agricultural commodity trade, the Bahamas' relied upon several periods of illicit trade to boost its economy. For example, during the American Civil War, Nassau was a thriving port for commodity trade for ships avoiding the Union blockade. Next, the Prohibition period in the 1920s led to economic prosperity through the illegal trafficking of alcohol to the United States. Finally, the drug trafficking routes through the

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<sup>164</sup> "Remembering Our Past: The Islands of the Bahamas," Bahamas, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://www.bahamas.com/history>.

<sup>165</sup> "The Bahamas Brief History," The British Empire, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/bahamas.htm>.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

islands have boosted the second economy (the black market) in lieu of tourism's profitability. The "legitimate" government's primary revenue source is tourism.<sup>168</sup>

## 2. Post-Independence SC

Even with hundreds of years of relative peace enjoyed under British rule, the Bahamas ability to combat illicit activities declined shortly after its independence. The Bahamas' peaceful transition from colonial rule to independence in 1973 was quickly overshadowed a decade later by implications of a corrupt and dysfunctional government. The timing of the independence occurred exactly when DTPs increased in the region, which appears to have had an immediate impact on the Bahamas' ability to combat rising DTPs. For example, in 1983, the *Miami Herald* published an article called "A Nation for Sale: Corruption in the Bahamas."<sup>169</sup>

As a result of the article, a commission convened on December 7, 1983 to look into the impacts of drug trafficking on the Bahamas. The report said that drugs were readily available and cheap, which resulted in many addicts. In addition, drug-related profits were distorting the economy, and the report questioned the ability to suppress the trade.<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, the level of complicity needed to support drug trafficking became apparent. For example, Norman's Cay was a prominent drug island where smuggling occurred by Columbian drug runners on airstrips and in harbors. The population and many key leaders were complicit in the activities, which negated interdiction efforts to stop the trafficking.<sup>171</sup> Although not many Bahamians were traffickers, they were paid to

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<sup>168</sup> Rochelle Turner, "Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2015 Bahamas," *World Travel and Tourism Council*, accessed March, 19, 2016, <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic%20impact%20research/countries%202015/bahamas2015.pdf>. In 2014, travel and tourism contributed \$1.7 billion to the Bahamas' GDP. This amount accounts for 20% of the Bahamas' GDP for 2014. "GDP at Market Prices (Current US\$)," World Bank, accessed June 4, 2016, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD/countries/BS?display=default>.

<sup>169</sup> Michael Craton and Gail Saunders, *Islanders in the Stream: A History of the Bahamian People*, Vol 2 (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 376.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 378.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 380–381.

turn a blind eye and allow trafficking to occur.<sup>172</sup> Finally, the commission discovered the prime minister's bank account had over five times the official salary for a prime minister (PM) between 1977 and 1983—with a \$750,000 gift, a \$474,000 finder's fee, \$250,000 from an American benefactor called Barber, and \$181,000 from unknown sources.<sup>173</sup>

The discovery of the PM's bank account scandal followed with another large scandal involving a Brazilian resort.<sup>174</sup> Both scandals led to the collapse of the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP). The PLP's opposition, the conservative Free National Movement (FNM), ran on a platform “promising a complete turnaround, the eradication of corruption, patronage, and slackness, the replacement of government overspending by new investments in the private sector, the revival of tourism, and the creation of more jobs.”<sup>175</sup> The problem is that the FNM ended up acting the same, despite its proposals for change. The FNM's continued corrupt nature after the PLP indicates another weak state, since corruption is a result of weak SC.

Crime and weak rule of law SC are additional characteristics that derailed the Bahamas' post-independence prospects in the 1980s and 1990s. The typical problems associated with weak rule of law SC and increasing crime rates are overcrowded prisons, undertrained and underfunded police forces, low conviction rates, and overburdened judicial systems. The Bahamas' faced all of these problems and rising crime rates, coupled with an inadequate education system.<sup>176</sup> In addition, the conviction rates were very dismal. For example, in 1981, there were 1,400 cases brought to court, but only 434

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<sup>172</sup> USDs transferred from Bimini to the Central Bank in Nassau went from \$544,360 in 1977 to \$1.4 million (M) in 1978, and to \$12.3M in 1983. Craton and Saunders, *Islanders in the Stream*, 381.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 382.

<sup>174</sup> The PLP was caught in the hotel scandal that coughed up \$82M to a Brazilian hotel and resort company. The FNM called for the privatization of the government's hotel businesses after the enormous waste, fraud, and corruption that were revealed from this business venture. The scandals led to a crushing defeat in the next elections with the FNM taking control. Craton and Saunders, *Islanders in the Stream*, 386.

<sup>175</sup> Craton and Saunders, *Islanders in the Stream*, 387.

<sup>176</sup> The Bahamas had the highest per capita crime rate in the world in 1979 and 1980. The crime rate increased from 11,586 in 1979 to 12,150 in 1980. “Royal Bahamas Police Force Annual Report for the Year 1980,” National Criminal Justice Reference Service, accessed May 5, 2016, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=80638>, abstract.

persons ended up in prison.<sup>177</sup> The abysmal prosecution and conviction rates means that if a criminal “commits a crime other than murder, there is a 70% chance he will not be caught, and even if he is, there is a long time before he goes to court for trial.”<sup>178</sup> All of the SC deficiencies the Bahamas faced made it vulnerable to increasing DTPs. The Bahamas’ ability to combat increasing DTPs, despite relatively weak SC in some areas, is a result of a willingness to change combined with increased cooperation and assistance by the United States. Therefore, the Bahamas is proof that a country can go from weak SC and high DTPs to a country with improved SC in the long run.

### **3. Cooperation with the U.S. and Increasing SECFOR SC**

A willingness to increase SECFOR SC, combined with cooperation with the U.S. government’s (USG’s) counter-narcotic agencies, has improved the Bahamas’ SECFOR SC. After DTOs took advantage of the Bahamas’ vulnerable post-independence phase, the government decided to make SECFOR SC changes. During the 1980s and 1990s, the police and defense forces were enlarged and made more professional “through the creation of a Police College, the institution of a special drug training course, and the expansion of the defense force’s flotilla to a dozen vessels” while simultaneously improving relations and cooperation with U.S. agencies.<sup>179</sup> The Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas’ (GCOB) synchronized counternarcotic efforts with the USG started with the 1988 UN Drug Convention.

The main goal of The 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (UN Drug Convention) is to ensure that the member nations took “necessary...legislative and administrative measures, in conformity with the fundamental provisions of their respective domestic legislative systems.”<sup>180</sup> Out of 106

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<sup>177</sup> Craton and Saunders, *Islanders in the Stream*, 418.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 420.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 383.

<sup>180</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances* (New York: United Nations, 1998), [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention\\_1988\\_en.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1988_en.pdf).

nations to ratify, the GCOB was the first to ratify the convention.<sup>181</sup> Since ratifying the convention, the GCOB has made continuous efforts to meet the plan's standards. As part of those efforts, the GCOB has partnered with USG on counternarcotic initiatives and in support via the International Narcotics Control (INC) board.

In 1998, the INC program worked with the Royal Bahamian Police Force (RBPF) to “train RBPF units to conduct sophisticated drug trafficking and money laundering investigations, and offers maritime interdiction training to the Royal Bahamian Defense Force [RBDF].”<sup>182</sup> These efforts are part of a “productive and positive counterdrug working relationship”<sup>183</sup> And have resulted in several accomplishments: reducing delays in criminal cases, improving the RBPF's Drug Enforcement Unit's (DEU's) ability to interdict drug shipments and pursue money launders, focusing prosecutorial efforts in the attorney general's office towards money laundering, continued cooperation on extradition requests, and focused law enforcement efforts for Operation Bahamas and Turks and Caicos (OPBAT). OPBAT is a program “designed to intercept narcotics shipments and arrest traffickers in the Turks and Caicos Islands and in the Bahamas.”<sup>184</sup> These efforts resulted in the arrest of 1,982 drug-related charges and 3.68 metric tons of cocaine seizures through the combined efforts of DEU and DEA in 1998.<sup>185</sup>

Since 1998, the relationship between the GCOB and the USG has continued to remain strong through OPBAT operations. For example, “operations in 2013 resulted in the seizure of more cocaine than in the previous three years combined.”<sup>186</sup> Continued

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<sup>181</sup> U.S. Department of State, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 1999), [http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/global/narcotics\\_law/1998\\_narc\\_report/major/Bahamas.html](http://1997-2001.state.gov/www/global/narcotics_law/1998_narc_report/major/Bahamas.html).

<sup>182</sup> “Bahamas,” Crime and Society, accessed May 5, 2016, <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/rwinslow/namerica/bahamas.html>.

<sup>183</sup> U.S. Department of State, *International Narcotics Control*.

<sup>184</sup> OPBAT is supported by USG helicopters operating from three bases in the Bahamas. U.S. Department of State, *International Narcotics Control*.

<sup>185</sup> The seizures were the highest since 1992. “Bahamas,” Crime and Society, accessed May 05, 2016, <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/rwinslow/namerica/bahamas.html>.

<sup>186</sup> U.S. Department of State, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2014: Vol I Drug and Chemical Control* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State, 2014), <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/222881.pdf>, 98.

efforts focus on institutional development, supply reduction, drug abuse awareness, demand reduction, treatment, and anti-corruption.<sup>187</sup> Of note, the USG assisted with the GCOB's 2012–2016 *National Anti-Drug Strategy*. The Anti-Drug Strategy's Urban Renewal 2.0 Program is a grassroots policing effort "that seeks to prevent crime, gang activity, and drug consumption through directed patrols, community partnerships, and after-school programming for youth (similar to Nicaragua's community programs)."<sup>188</sup> The Urban Renewal Program has increased conviction rates and decreased processing times for defendants from 300 days in 2012 to 70 days in 2013.<sup>189</sup>

Next, SC continues to improve through the bilateral cooperation efforts via the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), an initiative that contributes to the development of regional security capacities.<sup>190</sup> The U.S. has contributed \$263 million to the CBSI since 2010.<sup>191</sup> The funding allows for the "RBDF participation in U.S. foreign security assistance training programs as well as maritime training programs on topics including maritime law enforcement, small boat operations, port security, engineering, and maintenance."<sup>192</sup> In addition, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), U.S. Coast Guard, and RBDF conduct professional exchange programs with subject matter experts to enable SECFOR SC improvements.<sup>193</sup> Therefore, the reasons the Bahamas has had the SC to combat increasing DTPs while Haiti has faltered is due to the GCOB's willingness to implement institutional changes to increase the rule of law, SECFOR SC, and continue bilateral cooperation efforts with the USG via the CBSI.

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 98–101.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>190</sup> The CBSI "is one pillar of a U.S. security strategy focused on citizen safety throughout the hemisphere. CBSI brings all members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Dominican Republic together to jointly collaborate on regional security with the United States as a partner." U.S. Department of State, "Caribbean Basin Security Initiative," U.S. Department of State, accessed May 6, 2016, <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rt/cbsi/>.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> U.S. Department of State, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2014*, 101.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

## D. ANALYSIS

The difference in SC in Haiti and the Bahamas when DTOs entered the region is due to the different colonial institutional influences inherited from the Spanish and English respectively. Haiti's institutional and ideological influences led to a country whose SC was never high, yet not completely absent. The entrance of narcotics into the Caribbean in the 1970s–1980s increased DTPs while simultaneously straining the existing SC. According to the FSI, World Bank aggregate governance indicators, and CPIA, Haiti is a weak state that could not escape the effects of increasing DTPs once they were able to permeate its society in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>194</sup> In fact, SC in Haiti has been so low throughout its history that readily available data to measure its SC, in terms of governance and SECFOR, did not exist until the mid-1990s (World Bank governance indicators start in 1996).<sup>195</sup> Collectively, the SC assessments paint a bleak picture where Haiti has teetered on the verge of a collapsed state even though President Préval's administration attempted to correct Haiti's SC deficiencies. The 2010 earthquake provided a catalyst by which Haiti's SC for provision of public goods, rule of law, and security was eliminated.<sup>196</sup> Since SC in many areas ceased to exist after the earthquake, it is expected that the effects of DTPs should have a negative effect on perceived SL.

The Bahamas' SC struggled to combat increasing DTPs in the wake of its newly acquired independence from England. The difference in the outcomes between Haiti and the Bahamas' SC is that the Bahamas' demonstrated a willingness to implement institutional changes to increase rule of law and SECFOR SC while simultaneously

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<sup>194</sup> Haiti's provision of public goods SC is measured by the FSI and listed in table 2.1 from 2005 to 2015. During this period, Haiti's average ranking amongst 178 countries is 9.6 (1 is the most fragile ranking) with a high of 11 and low of 5, and it is amongst the worst five percent regarding governance. "Funds for Peace FSI," Fund for Peace, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://library.fundforpeace.org/fsi>.

Haiti's Quality of Public Administration rating, according to the CPIA, is a low 2.5 out of 6 from 2011 to 2015. "CPIA Quality of Public Administration Rating," World Bank, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IQ.CPA.PADM.XQ>.

<sup>195</sup> "World Bank Governance Indicators."

<sup>196</sup> The January 2010 earthquake destroyed state capacity. Government of the Republic of Haiti, *Haiti Earthquake PDNA: Assessment of Damage, Losses, General and Sectoral Needs, Annex to the Action Plan for National Recovery and Development of Haiti* (Port-au-Prince, Haiti: Government of the Republic of Haiti, 2010), [http://www.gafspfund.org/sites/gafspfund.org/files/Documents/Haiti\\_PDNA.pdf](http://www.gafspfund.org/sites/gafspfund.org/files/Documents/Haiti_PDNA.pdf), 5–7.

relying on USG support in counternarcotic endeavors. The USG support provided a safety net to the Bahamas that allowed it to steadily improve its governance and SECFOR SC, therefore allowing its SL to be higher than Haiti's.

### **1. Determining Haiti and the Bahamas' State Legitimacy Status**

Since my model predicts that DTPs have a negative impact on SL, and SC has a positive impact, a nation with insufficient SC to combat the negative impacts will result in lower SL than in countries whose SC is higher. In order to determine the effect that DTPs have on SL, it is necessary to measure SC variables. SC is measured through governance indicators and SECFOR numbers versus the SL, which is measured through variables of homicide and clearance rates. Homicide rates are a good indicator of SL because a state should exercise a monopoly on the legitimate use of force and higher rates of homicide erode this. SL is also measured by in-country surveys that look at perceived support for a stable democracy, corruption, and perception of insecurity.

Since DTPs remained similar for both countries, as SC decreases, homicide rates, should increase while clearance rates decrease and visa versa. Therefore, differences in their respective SCs allow analysis for which SL status each resides (i.e., narco-state, state under siege, vulnerable, and stable).

### **2. IV 1: State Capacity as Measured by Governance and Security Force Numbers**

State capacity will be measured by two indicators. The first is governance and the second are the military and police rates. Collectively, both indicators provide a clear picture for measuring SC.

#### ***a. Governance***

Governance SC is measured by the World Banks' aggregate governance indicators. The average percentiles of regional countries are plotted in Figure 2 for comparison. The figure offers predictable insight into SL for each country based on what percentile a country resides. For example, the United States' governance percentiles are in the highest 25 percent, which predicts a high SL and *stable state*. The Bahamas'

average percentage is 81.82, which also predicts a *stable state* SL status like the U.S. In contrast, Haiti’s governance percentiles are in the lowest 25 percent with a predictable low SL, which makes it a narco-state.<sup>197</sup>

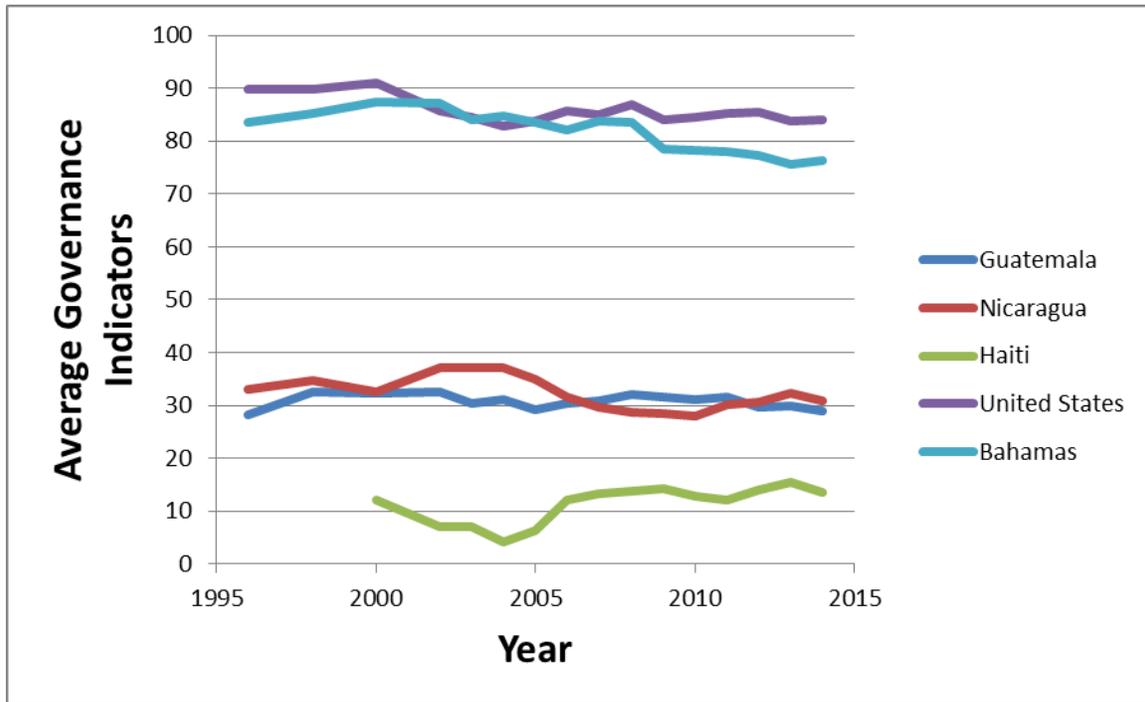


Figure 2. Governance Comparisons<sup>198</sup>

Since Haiti’s military was disbanded in 1995 due to “a long history of political involvement and human rights violations,” its SECFOR SC is solely dependent on MINUSTAH. See Figure 3.

<sup>197</sup> Haiti averages in the 11.51 percentile (one percent is the worst) and ranks 25 out of 215 countries with a low of 4.12 in 2004 and a high of 15.46 in 2013. “World Bank Governance Indicators.”

<sup>198</sup> Adapted from: “Worldwide Governance Indicators,” World Bank, accessed April 8, 2016, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=worldwide-governance-indicators#>.

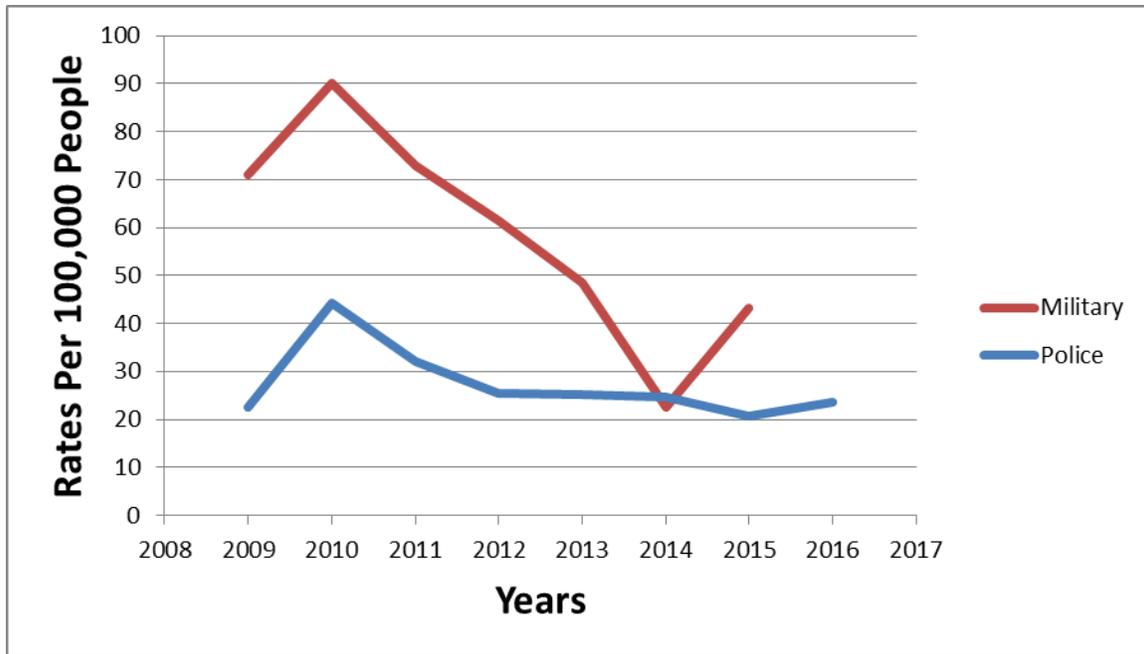


Figure 3. Haiti’s SECFOR SC from 2009 to 2016<sup>199</sup>

Haiti’s SECFOR SC peaked in 2010 after the response to the earthquake. Since then, it has averaged a police rate of 27.32 police per 100,000 citizens.<sup>200</sup> Haiti’s military rate has averaged 53.94 per 100,000 citizens.<sup>201</sup> Comparatively, Figure 4 displays the Bahamas SECFOR SC from 2005 to 2016.

<sup>199</sup> Adapted from: United Nations, “MINUSTAH,” United Nations, accessed May 23, 2016, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minustah/facts.shtml>; “Executive Summary Haiti,” Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment: Central America and the Caribbean, accessed April 27, 2016, <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/1302226>; “Haiti Population,” Countrymeters, accessed May 23, 2016, <http://countrymeters.info/en/Haiti>.

<sup>200</sup> Data from Haiti and BAH SECFOR Rates. United Nations, “MINUSTAH,” United Nations, accessed May 23, 2016, <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minustah/facts.shtml>; “Haiti Population,” Countrymeters, accessed May 6, 2016, <http://countrymeters.info/en/Haiti>.

<sup>200</sup> “Haiti Population,” *Countrymeters*, accessed May 23, 2016, <http://countrymeters.info/en/Haiti>.

<sup>200</sup> “Executive Summary Haiti,” Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment: Central America and the Caribbean, accessed April 27, 2016, <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/1302226>.

<sup>200</sup> “Haiti Population;” “Executive Summary Haiti.”

<sup>201</sup> Data on military personnel and police. United Nations, “MINUSTAH.”

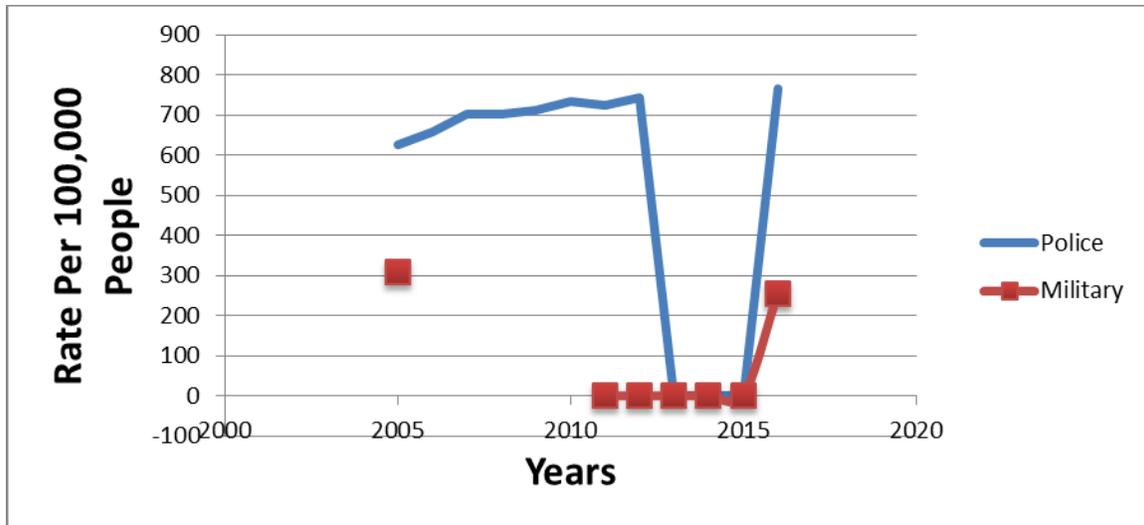


Figure 4. Bahamas SECFOR SC from 2005 to 2016<sup>202</sup>

In Bahamas, the police rate averaged 707.1 police per 100,000 citizens, and the military rate averaged 281.26 from 2005 to 2016. The UN recommends at least 222 police officers for every 100,000 residents.<sup>203</sup> Haiti’s SECFOR SC numbers alone are statistically detrimental to effective SC. For example, the average police rate for Haiti from 2009 to 2016 is 27.32.<sup>204</sup> The Bahamas average police rate is 707.09 from 2005 to 2016, which is 25.8 times higher than Haiti’s. Having more police per 100,000 citizens is predictably a good indicator of a state’s ability to combat criminal activities. Clearance rates are also a good indicator of the SECFOR’s effectiveness in those endeavors.

<sup>202</sup> Adapted from: Revolvly, “Royal Bahamas Defence Force,” Revolvly, accessed May 6, 2016, [http://www.revolvly.com/main/index.php?s=Royal%20Bahamas%20Defence%20Force&item\\_type=topic](http://www.revolvly.com/main/index.php?s=Royal%20Bahamas%20Defence%20Force&item_type=topic); Countrymeters, “Bahamas Population,” Countrymeters, accessed May 6, 2016, <http://countrymeters.info/en/Bahamas>.

<sup>203</sup> Patrick Corcoran, “Report Puts Guatemala National Police under the Microscope,” Insight Crime, accessed April 22, 2016, <http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/report-puts-guatemala-national-police-under-the-microscope>.

<sup>204</sup> Data Haiti and BAH SECFOR Rates. United Nations, “MINUSTAH;” “Haiti Population;” “Executive Summary Haiti.”

## **E. STATE LEGITIMACY DEPENDENT VARIABLES**

Despite the Bahamas' significant advantage in SECFOR rates, homicide rates indicate an anomaly in the relationship between SECFOR SC and lower crime rates. Reasonable predictions would assume a higher police rate would result in lower homicide rates; however, according to Figure 5, the Bahamas' average homicide rate is three times higher than Haiti's from 2007 to 2012 (21.38 versus 7.08).<sup>205</sup>

Clearance rates can provide insight to the anomaly; however, given the situation in Haiti there is a lack of available use of data in terms of clearance, prosecution, and incarceration rates. Therefore, comparing the Bahamas' clearance rate of 56.61 percent to the average clearance rates in the America's is the only measurable indicator of SECFOR SC.<sup>206</sup> It is expected that with an above average clearance rate, the Bahamas SECFOR SC should be relatively effective at combating and deterring crime; however, the data shows otherwise. Explanations for the conflicting data may be linked to increasing SECFOR SC and DTPs. As the two battle for control or survival, murder rates may rise when competing cartels fight for control.

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<sup>205</sup> Data Homicide Rates BAH UNODC spreadsheet. "UNODC Statistics Database," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, accessed April 8, 2016, <https://data.unodc.org/#state:26>.

<sup>206</sup> Data on clearance rates spreadsheet for the BAH. "UNODC Statistics Database."

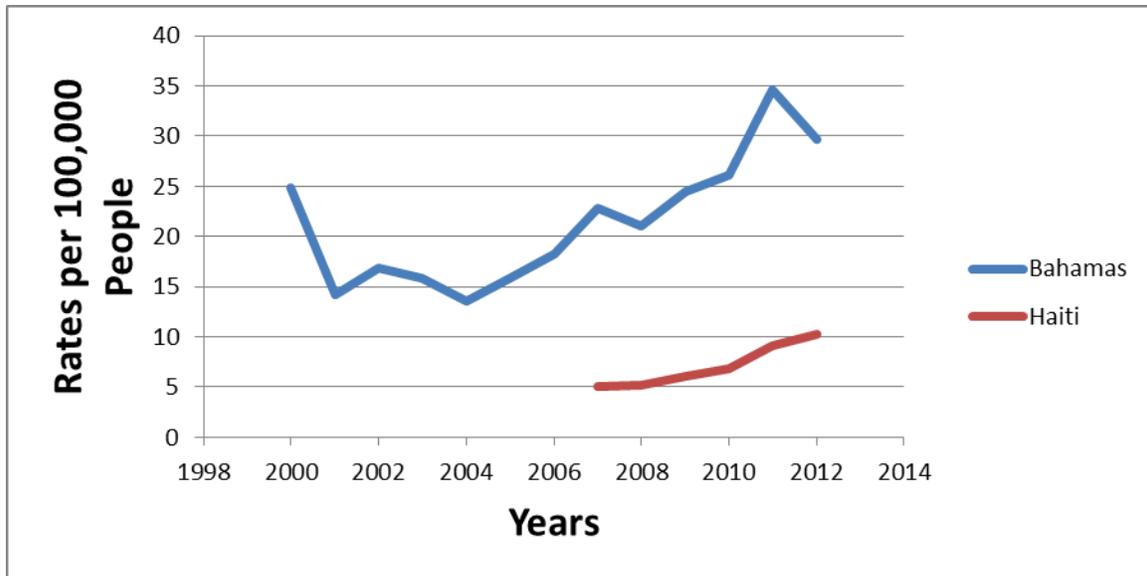


Figure 5. Homicide Rates in Haiti and the Bahamas<sup>207</sup>

State legitimacy reflects the interaction between DTPs and SC. DTPs have a negative impact on SL, while SC has a positive effect on SL. SC refers to its institutional ability to combat the effects of DTPs, and the outcome determines the level of SL perceived by its citizens. Additionally, SL is measured by support for stable democracy, corruption, and perception of physical security.

The first SL measurement is support for a stable democracy. Haiti's support for a stable democracy decreased from 89.1 percent in 2006 to 81.8 percent in 2008.<sup>208</sup> Regional comparisons are 81.5 percent for the U.S. and 89.1 percent for Jamaica.<sup>209</sup> Not surprisingly, Haiti's support for democracy decreased to 70.4 percent in 2012 as a result of the 2010 earthquake's aftermath, which decimated SC. Regional comparisons for the same year are 73.8 percent in Jamaica and 76.4 percent in the United States.<sup>210</sup> Haiti's

<sup>207</sup> Adapted from: "UNODC Statistics Database;" "Homicide Rates for Haiti," Nationmaster, accessed June 4, 2016, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/profiles/Haiti/Crime#2010>.

<sup>208</sup> Mitchell A. Seligson and Dominique Zéphyr, *Democratic Values in Haiti, 2006–2008* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, 2008), <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/ab2008/haiti-en.pdf>, 16.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>210</sup> Amy Erica Smith, Francois Gélinau, and Mitchell A. Seligson, *The Political Culture of Democracy in Haiti and in the Americas, 2012* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, 2012), [http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/haiti/Haiti\\_Country\\_Report\\_2012\\_English\\_Cover\\_V2\\_W.pdf](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/haiti/Haiti_Country_Report_2012_English_Cover_V2_W.pdf), 153.

percentage is in the highest percentile quarter (76–100 percent), which places its SL for this measurement in the stable-state model.

Survey data on stable democracy is not available for the Bahamas; however, its history of plural political parties since 1953 demonstrates a stable affinity for democracy, albeit the degree of which is difficult to measure without survey data.<sup>211</sup> In addition, the governance indicators from 1996 to 2014 have an average of 81.82 percent.<sup>212</sup> The Bahamas governance percentage is in the highest percentile quarter, which places its SL measurement in the *stable-state* model.

The next SL measurement is corruption. Haiti's perception of corruption went from 56.4 percent in 2006–2008 to 66.4 percent in 2012.<sup>213</sup> Regional comparisons are 66.3 percent for the U.S. and 75.2 percent in Jamaica in 2012.<sup>214</sup> Haiti's perception of corruption is the lowest in the region according to the LAPOP barometer, which is in direct contrast to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). The surveyors are "convinced that this perception is telling us more that people are so used to corruption in the country that they consider it to be normal."<sup>215</sup> Haiti's CPI is 94.89 percent, one of the highest in the world.<sup>216</sup> Comparatively, the Bahamas' CPII went from 12.5 percent in 2012 to 13.7 percent in 2014.<sup>217</sup> Based on these percentages, Haiti's SL for this measurement is in the worst percentile quarter (76–100 percent), which places its SL for this measurement in the narco-state status. This measure of PCI for the Bahamas is

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<sup>211</sup> Philip C. Galanis, "Plural Political Parties in the Bahamas," *Nassau Guardian*, November 30, 2015, <http://www.thenassauguardian.com/opinion/op-ed/60964-plural-political-parties-in-the-bahamas-pt-1>.

<sup>212</sup> "Worldwide Governance Indicators," World Bank, accessed April 8, 2016, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=worldwide-governance-indicators#>.

<sup>213</sup> Seligson and Zéphyr, *Democratic Values in Haiti*, 29; Smith, Gélinau, and Seligson, *The Political Culture of Democracy*, 112.

<sup>214</sup> Smith, Gélinau, and Seligson, *The Political Culture of Democracy*, 104.

<sup>215</sup> Seligson, and Zéphyr, *Democratic Values in Haiti*, 28.

<sup>216</sup> "Corruption Perceptions Index," Transparency International, accessed May 6, 2016, <http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview>.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*

in the best percentile quarter (0–25 percent), which places its SL for this measurement in a *stable state* status.<sup>218</sup>

The third SL measurement is perception of insecurity. Haiti's measure of insecurity expectedly increased from 45.2 percent from 2006–2008 to 51.7 percent in 2012.<sup>219</sup> Regional comparisons are 29 percent in Jamaica and 54.7 percent in Mexico in 2012.<sup>220</sup> There is no data available for measurements of insecurity among Bahamian citizens; however, the trend in crime rates depicts a likely perceived insecurity that is high. For example, murder rates went from 14.3 in 2011 to record setting levels of 32.5 in 2012. Due to the Bahamas' much higher crime rate than Haiti, it is safe to place them in the lower percentile quarter and in a state under siege SL status (26–50 percent). Haiti's insecurity percentages place it in the *vulnerable state* SL status (51–75 percent); however, a vulnerable state SL status exists when low DTPs coincide with low SC. Haiti is clearly under the constant threat of high DTPs and low SC, which has been bolstered only through MINISTUHS' efforts. Therefore, Haiti's overall SL status is a narco-state.

Haiti's legitimacy reflects the relationship between increasing DTPs and low SC in terms of government and SECFOR. Despite its perceived stable support for democracy, its abysmal governance, rampant corruption, and insecurity are no match for consistently high DTPs. The only SC that Haiti can rely upon is the foreign SECFOR SC provided by MINISTUH. In this region, foreign assistance can be a game changer for enabling SC to get to a point where it can stand on its own.

The Bahamas' legitimacy demonstrates the relationship between moderate SC and high DTPs in terms of governance and SECFOR. The difference in the Bahamas' SC versus that of Haiti is the willingness to implement institutional change, combined with USG assistance, to combat the effects of drug trafficking. The Bahamas acceptance and close cooperation with the USG has allowed it to work through its internal SC deficiencies that have been plagued by corruption and violence, so that it is able to still

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Seligson, and Zéphyr, *Democratic Values in Haiti*, 41; Smith, Gélinau, and Seligson, *The Political Culture of Democracy*, 112.

<sup>220</sup> Smith, Gélinau, and Seligson, *The Political Culture of Democracy*, 112.

maintain a state under siege/ stable SL status. Table 2 summarizes the resulting SL statuses for both countries.

Table 2. State Legitimacy Outcomes Haiti and the Bahamas

		<b>Independent Variable: 1 DTO PRESSURE</b>	<b>Independent Variable 2: State Capacity</b>	<b>Dependent Variable: State Legitimacy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Case 1	Haiti	High	Low	Low	Narco-state
Case 2	Bahamas	High	High	High	Under siege/ Stable

## F. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Table 3 depicts the relationship between different DTPs and SC levels and the corresponding SL statuses.

Table 3. State Legitimacy Status Haiti and the Bahamas

		DRUG TRAFFICKING PRESSURES (DTPs)	
		Low	High
STATE CAPACITY (SC)	Low	Vulnerable	Narco-State Haiti
	High	Stable Bahamas	Under Siege Bahamas

Haiti and the Bahamas are two regional neighbors with geographic and economic similarities. Despite the similarities, Haiti does not have the SC to decrease the negative effects of DTPs on its SL. Haiti's ideological and colonial institutional influences have resulted in weak SC, which has not improved to a point that effective changes can be made. Furthermore, the 2010 earthquake erased any potential improvements in SC, resulting in Haiti's reliance on foreign SECFOR (MINUSTAH). Hopefully, with MINUSTAH's support, it can attempt to rebuild its institutions and hopefully improve its SC to combat the effects of DTPs. Until Haiti is able to improve its SC, its SL will remain in a narco-state status.

On the contrary, the Bahamas' displayed willingness to implement SC changes after independence has allowed it to avoid a plight similar to that of Haiti. The Bahamas' improvements to its SECFOR, combined with close cooperation and coordination with USG agencies, allows it to effectively combat DTPs. With continued improvements in governance and SECFOR, the Bahamas SL should improve from a state under siege/stable state to a clearly stable state status.

### III. NICARAGUA AND GUATEMALA: STATES UNDER SIEGE

High levels of violence, poverty, and inequality are the characteristics associated with Central America. The sociopolitical and economic history of this region helps to explain why these characteristics exist, but more importantly, they provide insight into why DTOs prefer to operate here (see Table 4).

Table 4. State Legitimacy Status Nicaragua and Guatemala

		DRUG TRAFFICKING PRESSURES (DTPs)	
		Low	High
STATE CAPACITY (SC)	Low	Vulnerable	Narco-State
	High	Stable	Under Siege Nicaragua Guatemala

Violence in Central America can be traced back to its colonization by Spanish Conquistadores. Violence has continued to influence Central America countries' relatively recent path to democracy too. In the 1960s, revolutionary groups appeared, followed by economic crises and political unrest in the 1970s.<sup>221</sup> The Northern Triangle regimes of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador refused to address their populations' grievances, which resulted in radicalized revolutionary groups and political opposition.<sup>222</sup> The radicalized groups used extreme violence over the last 50 years to further their agenda through the democratization period.<sup>223</sup>

<sup>221</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], *Crime and Development in Central America: Caught in the Crossfire* (New York: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2007), [https://www.unodc.org/pdf/research/Central\\_America\\_Study\\_2007.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/pdf/research/Central_America_Study_2007.pdf), 12, 1.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>223</sup> John Booth, Christine Wade, and Thomas Walker, *Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion, and Change* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2015), 3.

Despite being the poorest country in Central America, Nicaragua still boasts as having the lowest crime rates and being the safest country in the region. Army and police chiefs describe the “wall of containment” that has limited the flow of drug trafficking and kept DTOs out of Nicaragua’s borders.<sup>224</sup> In addition, Nicaragua’s decision to improve SECFOR capacity through surveillance and interdiction capabilities has contributed to its significantly lower crime and drugs transiting its borders.<sup>225</sup> According to José Adán Silva, “Nicaragua is waging a successful war in the courts, by sea, and on land against drug traffickers shipping drugs through Central America to the United States.”<sup>226</sup> Conversely, Nicaragua’s troubled neighbor to the north (Guatemala) had its former president, Otto Pérez Molina, resign and be arrested in September 2015 for “a corruption scandal that gutted his government and plunged the country into a political crisis.”<sup>227</sup> In addition, Guatemala and the two other Northern Triangle countries have the highest murder rates in the world outside of a declared combat zone. Despite the incessant violence, the U.S. recently threatened to withhold some of the \$750 million aid package if the Northern Triangle countries do not make efforts to demilitarize their citizen police forces.<sup>228</sup> This seems contradictory, since the little security that does exist in Guatemala is provided by the military in the face of inefficient, corrupt, and incapable police forces. Without improvements to Guatemala’s SECFOR SC, it will continue to fall prey to DTPs, extreme crime rates, and rampant corruption.

The influence of DTPs and SC on SL in Central America produced two countries that are under siege. As the drug trafficking supply routes shifted from the Caribbean to

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<sup>224</sup> Michael Lohmuller, “Is Nicaragua as Effective at Deterring Drug Trafficking as it Claims?” Insight Crime, accessed May 7, 2016, <http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/is-nicaragua-as-effective-at-deterring-drug-trafficking-as-claimed>.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> José Adán Silva, “Nicaragua Stands Out in War on Drugs in Central America,” *Inter Press Service*, September 15, 2012, <http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/09/nicaragua-stands-out-in-war-on-drugs-in-central-america/>.

<sup>227</sup> Reuters, “Guatemalan President Quits and Then Jailed,” *Telegraph*, September 4, 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/centralamericaandthecaribbean/guatemala/11843146/Guatemalan-president-quits-and-then-jailed.html>.

<sup>228</sup> Mimi Yagoub, “US Push to De-Militarize CentAm Policing Poses a Dilemma,” Insight Crime, accessed May 07, 2016, <http://www.insightcrime.org/news-briefs/us-calls-for-militarization-central-america-present-dilemma>.

Central America in the late 1980s and early 1990s, countries like Guatemala and Nicaragua were faced with additional challenges to their state's capacity. As DTPs increased, the differences in SC yield predictable results in terms of SL; low SC yields low SL and vice versa. Based on these differences, Guatemala is a state under siege and on the brink of becoming a narco-state. Nicaragua is also a state under siege, but it is comparatively stronger than Guatemala due to higher SC that is capable of combatting DTPs. These differences are reflected in the perceived SL of each population.

How has Nicaragua's SC been able to counter increasing DTPs' negative influences on SL while Guatemala has not? Both countries are exposed to the region's geographic, economic, and criminal justice conditions that are common amongst most Central American countries. These conditions place the Central American countries in a vulnerable position, due to increasing DTPs, when countries do not have the SC to respond.

In this chapter, I discuss how the regional background conditions and DTPs impact state legitimacy in Central America. Next, I analyze the two cases (Nicaragua and Guatemala) with respect to their independent and dependent variables. I begin with the variable of drug trafficking pressure, then look to state capacity, and finish by looking at how these variables explain the divergent measures for the dependent variable. Finally, I conclude by summarizing the findings of this chapter.

## **A. CENTRAL AMERICA CHARACTERISTICS**

Prior to the 1990s, the primary drug route to the United States from South America went through the Caribbean.<sup>229</sup> However, increasing interdiction of DTO activities by the U.S. Coast Guard, Drug Enforcement Agency, and governments of the Caribbean caused DTOs to shift their supply routes around 1990 to Mexico and Central America.<sup>230</sup> The drug supply route shift increased the presence and influence of DTOs

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<sup>229</sup> "Drug Trafficking: Central America's Dark Shadow," Council on Hemispheric Affairs, accessed December 22, 2015, <http://www.coha.org/drug-trafficking-central-americas-dark-shadow/>.

<sup>230</sup> International Narcotics Control Board, *Annual Report 1990*, <https://www.incb.org/incb/en/publications/annual-reports/annual-report-1990-1999.html>, 30.

and resulted in Central America's new role as the supply artery for narcotics moving north.

Central America is geographically vulnerable because it is the bridge between drug trafficking supplies of South America and the consumer entities Mexico and the United States. The term "bridge countries" describes the role Central American countries play in the drug trafficking business. Shipments from South America enter Central America, Honduras for example, because it is a calculated waypoint needed for refueling before final destinations in Mexico or the United States.<sup>231</sup> Furthermore, the natural terrain of the bridge countries provides cover and concealment for cultivation, storage, and shipment of narcotics. The weakened nature of Central American states results in vast areas of lawlessness in which law enforcement agencies cannot operate due to corruption and capacity deficiencies. In addition, the porous nature of the borders between Guatemala, Belize, and Mexico have hundreds of miles of unsecure borders enabling DTOs to pick when and where shipments cross undetected. DTOs understand the extent of the law's reach and purposefully operate an additional arm's length away. Understanding this causal relationship explains the shift in trafficking routes from the Caribbean to Central America.

In addition to geographic factors, extreme poverty and inequality create vulnerabilities in Central America. Poverty rates are exacerbated by the degree of inequality that exists. Central America has high-income inequality wherein the wealthiest one tenth earns 25 times more than the poorest one tenth.<sup>232</sup> Inequality leads to increasing tensions between the elite and impoverished, which is compounded by a largely dominant male and unemployed population.<sup>233</sup> El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala are the most unequal countries in the world, and they also have the most crime.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Class notes, NS4059 Special Topics: Latin America (Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, November 4, 2015).

<sup>232</sup> Booth, Wade, and Walker, *Understanding Central America*, 17.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

In addition, unemployment rates contribute to crime. Idle youth are more susceptible to exposure to gangs and criminal activities if they do not have jobs.<sup>235</sup> This trend compounds the economic situation because growth and development will not occur where crime is rampant; therefore, unemployment will continue to remain high and more people will be influenced by *maras* (gangs) and DTOs to commit crimes. Furthermore, there are roughly one to two million weapons in circulation throughout the region.<sup>236</sup> A large, unemployed, youthful, male-dominated population combined with an abundance of weapons is a recipe for increased crime and violence.<sup>237</sup>

Where there is extreme poverty, DTOs provide alternative means to make a living as the economic incentives to work for the DTOs outweigh the costs of starving. The poverty severity is so dire that wherever someone passes on the opportunity to support DTOs, is incarcerated, or killed, someone is always there to replace him or her.<sup>238</sup> A \$15–42 billion a year industry allows for an abundance of cash that DTOs can use to bribe officials, recruit local employees and subcontractors, purchase facilities for smuggling operations and product storage, and transport drugs.<sup>239</sup> According to Bunk and Fowler, “Personal economic travails have aligned with the objectives and operations of international DTOs.”<sup>240</sup> Since economic progress is linked to FDI, but crime and corruption deter FDI, it is a helpless situation until the states are able to reduce corruption and increase security. Until SC improves, growth and development will continue to falter, and the DTOs will continue to spread crime and violence through the ranks of the impoverished.

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<sup>235</sup> UNODC, *Crime and Development*, 26; U.S. Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, *Responding to Violence in Central America* (Washington, DC: U.S. Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, 2011), <http://www.drugcaucus.senate.gov/sites/default/files/FINAL%20Responding-to-Violence-in-Central-America-2011.pdf>, 13, 23.

<sup>236</sup> Bunk and Fowler, *Drug Trafficking*, 20.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

Corruption is at the heart of most Central American criminal justice systems' woes. Corruption erodes the state's ability to uphold its end of the social contract through the provision of public goods. In turn, ineffectiveness breeds contempt for official processes, as police officers, lawyers, and witnesses watch a defunct system waste away the efforts of many people with a simple bribe to the judge or prosecutor.<sup>241</sup> DTOs, maras, and the elite can feed off a system that exonerates their crimes for the right price. DTOs are able to undermine the state's capacities by putting key officials on their payrolls. With an elite population that runs the political decision-making bodies of the state, it only takes a few corrupt individuals to prevent institutional change from occurring. Unfortunately, there are more than a few corrupt individuals in key positions in Central American countries. The result is a group of countries that continue to make the conscious decision to have some of the world's lowest percentages of GDP going to security. Until tax reform occurs, the population is not invested to demand performance-based results for their tax dollars. As it works to their advantages, DTOs are content with this situation.

## **B. CASE STUDIES**

Nicaragua and Guatemala share many similarities from their recent history after independence from Spain in the early 1800s. For instance, both countries fought bitter civil wars over political divides between liberal and conservative factions, both were ruled by a dictatorship, both transitioned to democracy after extensive civil wars, and both are subject to numerous vulnerabilities that plague the Central American region. Despite the similarities that Nicaragua and Guatemala share, they both differ greatly in their respective SC to combat the effects of DTOs.

Some authors argue that the role of the SECFOR during the transition to democracy after the civil wars explains the difference in SC in Nicaragua and Guatemala.<sup>242</sup> Another argument is that incessant U.S. intervention in Nicaragua required

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<sup>241</sup> UNODC, *Crime and Development*, 29–31.

<sup>242</sup> Roberto J. Atha, "Transitions to Peace: Effects on Internal Security Forces in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2008), i.

a strong army and internal security force to prevent a government overthrow by the US-backed Contras. The last argument is that low SC is a policy choice (Guatemala has the lowest tax rates and percentage of GDP that goes towards security SC). I argue that Nicaragua's SECFOR SC is greater than Guatemala's because of the decisions to resource (personnel and equipment backed by U.S.), fund, and implement anti-drug policies. Nicaragua's ability to adapt to high DTP has allowed it to achieve a higher SL than Guatemala during similar timeframes.

### C. NICARAGUA BACKGROUND

Nicaragua's political rivalries between liberals and conservatives goes back to 1838 when the Central American Federation collapsed. This also began a long history of U.S. intervention in the affairs of Nicaragua as William Walker, a U.S. citizen, took over the country and made himself president at the request of liberal leaders.<sup>243</sup> In 1909, the U.S. supported the conservative revolt that led to a guerilla war from 1912 to 1933. U.S. Marines intervened and fought against the liberal guerillas led by General Augusto Cesar Sandino, for whom the Sandinistas named themselves under the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).<sup>244</sup> From 1936 to 1979, the Anastasio Somoza family dictatorship ruled Nicaragua until their overthrow by the Marxist FSLN.<sup>245</sup>

During the FSLN-supported Sandinista regime, U.S. intervention continued to influence policy decisions. For instance, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) supported the Contra rebels who were still fighting the Sandinistas from Costa Rica and Honduras,<sup>246</sup> which led to the *72-hour Document*. This document identified the U.S. and

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<sup>243</sup> "Liberal leader General Francisco de Castellón invited...Walker...to be the defender of the liberals." Stefan Smagula, "Nicaraguan Americans," *Countries and Their Cultures*, accessed April 09, 2016, <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Nicaraguan-Americans.html>.

<sup>244</sup> "Nicaragua," Rohan, accessed April 09, 2016, <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/faculty/rwinslow/namerica/nicaragua.html>.

<sup>245</sup> Smagula, "Nicaraguan Americans."

<sup>246</sup> The CIA began supporting cocaine shipments to the US. To fund the Contras guerrilla movement against the Sandinista regime. Further, the U.S. imposed an embargo fearing the threat of Marxism. Unofficially, the U.S. supplied the anti-Sandinista Contras with weapons and money, which led to the revelation of the infamous Iran-Contra scandal. "Timeline Nicaragua," *Timelines of History*, accessed April, 09, 2016, <http://www.timelines.ws/countries/NICARAGUA.HTML>.

the Contras as Nicaragua's largest threats.<sup>247</sup> Fearing a U.S. takeover, the Sandinista regime focused on increasing its SC against external and internal threats.

Combatting the U.S. and Contra threats required increasing the SECFOR SC. The Sandinista's People's Army (EPS) increased its forces from 5,000 to 250,000 and implemented a draft with a mandatory two-year service requirement.<sup>248</sup> In addition, Cuba and Russia provided advisors and training to improve the capabilities of the greatly increased SECFOR.<sup>249</sup>

In addition, the Ministry of the Interior (MINT) revamped its efforts to gather intelligence and conduct surveillance on potential subversive internal security threats. MINT's efforts focused on developing local intelligence gathering driven by a "vast network of informers."<sup>250</sup> The network of informers were called the Sandinista Defense Committees (CDS), and they were highly effective at limiting criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, petty crime, and the incidents of violence.<sup>251</sup>

Finally, the Sandinista Police (PS) was developed to alleviate the National Guard's task to perform police services.<sup>252</sup> The PS and CDS combined efforts to focus on local-level crime prevention and intervention that resulted in a network of "nearly 1,600 local committees with more than 12,000 community volunteers working with the 1,500

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<sup>247</sup> The 72-Hour Document predicted an "inevitable confrontation with the United States, which would necessitate the consolidation of Sandinista domestic power with the backing of a large and heavily-armed Sandinista People's Army (EPS)." Roger Miranda, and William Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua: Inside the Sandinistas* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1993), 5.

<sup>248</sup> Miranda and Ratliff, *The Civil War in Nicaragua*. The draft increased the numbers of military aged males to roughly 150,000. Kent Norworthy and Tom Barry, *Nicaragua: A Country Guide*, 2nd ed. (Albuquerque: The Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center), 51.

<sup>249</sup> Nicaragua hosted "between 2,500 and 3,000 Cuban and other Soviet-bloc security personnel, and an equal number of civilian advisers." Linda Robinson, *Intervention or Neglect: The United States and Central America beyond the 1980s* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1991), 15.

<sup>250</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Nicaragua's Interior Ministry: Instrument of Political Consolidation* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1987), 176.

<sup>251</sup> Thomas W. Walker, *Nicaragua: The Land of Sandino*, 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 127.

<sup>252</sup> Robinson, *Intervention or Neglect*, 12.

police [that] created an early warning system.”<sup>253</sup> SECFOR SC improvements at the national, state, and local-levels designed to combat the external and internal threats to the FSLN, proved to be successful deterrents to DTO activities too.

After the defeat of the communist President Daniel Ortega in the 1990 elections, new President Violeta Chamorro began the transition to peace for the country. Despite the end of the Sandinista regime’s 11-year rule, the SECFOR enjoyed a favorable position, maintaining its power and structure during the transition.<sup>254</sup> Divided opposition between the Contras and Chamorro’s Unión Nacional Opositora (UNO) party allowed the SECFOR to maintain its strength. Furthermore, the contra’s lack of battlefield success did not give them bargaining leverage to negotiate favorable terms for the peace transition.<sup>255</sup> Therefore, Chamorro had to compromise and focused on reconciliation that allowed the Sandinista controlled SECFOR to “preserve the integrity and core capabilities of the effective security apparatus they had created.”<sup>256</sup>

The peace transition process institutionalized the SECFOR’s capabilities and previous success. The core capabilities of a large army were retained, and the intelligence gathering capabilities of MINT were rolled into the creation of the Directorate of Defense Information (DID).<sup>257</sup> The DID’s increased personnel resources allowed for military and internal intelligence gathering. In addition, the national police improved its force through

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<sup>253</sup> “Nicaragua has a minor, largely localized gang problem with no international gangs. An anti-gang law was considered but not adopted. Nicaragua emphasizes prevention and intervention approaches integrated with law enforcement.” U.S. Agency for International Development, *Central America and Mexico Gang Assessment* (Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development, 2006), [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pnadg834.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnadg834.pdf), 7.

<sup>254</sup> The SECFOR enjoyed a reputation of success against internal and external threats. Further, the strength in the SECFOR’s position rested from the fractured opposition that did not unite against the Sandinistas during the transition. Last, the contras “played a minor role in the initial transition process as the Sandinistas and UNO negotiated the protocol of agreement for the transfer of power.” Atha, “Transitions to Peace,” 20–21.

<sup>255</sup> According to Spalding, “Each of the major [Contra] groups wound up negotiating a separate peace with the Chamorro government.” Rose J. Spalding, “From Low-Intensity War to Low-Intensity Peace: The Nicaraguan Peace Process,” in *Comparative Peace Processes in Latin America*, ed. Cynthia J. Arnson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 36.

<sup>256</sup> Sandinista’s maintained their leadership positions in the SECFOR, oversaw troop reductions that kept the most capable soldiers in place. Atha, “Transitions to Peace,” 22–23.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

more demanding acceptance criteria, better training, education, and retaining its human capital.<sup>258</sup> With the SECFOR's capabilities intact and improved upon, Nicaragua's ability to combat the effects of DTOs amid shared regional vulnerabilities was high.

The improved capabilities continued through the post-transition years. According to José Silva, "Nicaragua is waging a successful war in the courts, by sea, and on land against drug traffickers shipping drugs through Central America to the United States."<sup>259</sup> In fact, Nicaragua's SECFOR SC makes it the safest country in Central America and a model to emulate regarding the fight against drug trafficking and crime.<sup>260</sup>

#### **D. GUATEMALA BACKGROUND**

Since its independence from Spain in 1821, military juntas and dictator generals mostly ruled Guatemala until the end of the civil war in 1996.<sup>261</sup> Whether it is the cultural remnants of Spanish patrimonialism, or *caudillismo* at its finest, Guatemala's history of leaders used corruption to exploit the population and the military to suppress any opposition.<sup>262</sup> The long 36-year civil war served to institutionalize the military's corrupt nature and sharpened its skills at repressing internal subversive forces.

Another similarity that Guatemala shares with Nicaragua is U.S. intervention. In 1944, a revolution resulted in Communist-supported Jacob Guzman Arbenz becoming the president of Guatemala from 1951–1954. President Arbenz was an extreme leftist whose

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<sup>258</sup> The police implemented a successful prevention program for at-risk youth that raised their legitimacy in the public's eyes and also lowered criminal and gang activity. Atha, "Transitions to Peace," 25.

<sup>259</sup> José Adán Silva, "Nicaragua Stands Out in War on Drugs in Central America," Inter Press Service, September 15, 2012, accessed April 26, 2016, <http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/09/nicaragua-stands-out-in-war-on-drugs-in-central-america/>.

<sup>260</sup> According to Silva, "Army and police chiefs describe Nicaragua as the safest country in Central America, and say it has become a retaining wall against drug trafficking, even though there are fewer than 30,000 police and military troops to patrol the country's 280,000 square kilometers of exclusive economic zone in the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean, as well as the land borders with Costa Rica and Honduras." Silva, "Nicaragua Stands Out."

<sup>261</sup> Timelines of History, "Timeline Guatemala," Timelines of History, accessed April 10, 2016, <http://timelines.ws/countries/GUATEMALA.HTML>.

<sup>262</sup> According to the Timelines of History website, "Pres. Manuel Estrada Cabrera was one of the first Latin dictators to create his own secret police. He plundered the treasury, expanded the standing army, and systematically oppressed his opponents." Timelines of History, "Timeline Guatemala."

decision to expropriate the United Fruit Company resulted in a U.S.-backed coup that overthrew his government. In 1954, CIA-backed rebels overthrew Arbenz's government, which led to 30 years of military rule.<sup>263</sup>

The Guatemalan civil war lasted from 1960–1996 as the military-controlled government fought against Marxist rebels. During the war, the army masterfully and brutally suppressed subversive forces, leading to numerous outcries of human rights violations.<sup>264</sup> Under Generals Efraín Ríos Montt and Humberto Mejía Victores' combined four-year rule, the violence spread throughout the country as the military committed genocidal acts against the Mayan populations and made thousands of people disappear.<sup>265</sup> A testament to Guatemala's SECFOR SC is the hundreds of thousands of deaths of the citizens and rebels who fought the army.<sup>266</sup> Over time, the Guatemalan SECFOR systematically wore down its enemies so that when the time for democratic peace transitions occurred, they held a weighted hand at the bargaining table.

Guatemala's military was very influential in the transition to democracy and eventual peace accords. The opportunity for democratization came from “the wearing down of the military governments, which faced the country's growing economic problems, the erosion of their traditional support from the organized private sector, and the beginning of protests from some social sectors, particularly the middle class.”<sup>267</sup> In

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<sup>263</sup> Timelines of History, “Timeline Guatemala.”

<sup>264</sup> According to Timelines of History, “On May 20, 1999 a document was made public that listed the execution of the people that disappeared during this period.” Timelines of History, “Timeline Guatemala.” Miller reports, in 1981, “The Inter-American Human Rights Commission released a report blaming the Guatemalan government for thousands of illegal executions and missing persons in the 1970s, and documenting accounts of the slaughter of members of Indian communities.” Talea Miller, “Timeline: Guatemala's Brutal Civil War,” *PBS Newshour*, March 7, 2011, [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/latin\\_america-jan-june11-timeline\\_03-07/](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/latin_america-jan-june11-timeline_03-07/).

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> According to Miller, “More than 200,000 people were killed over the course of the 36-year-long civil war that began in 1960 and ended with peace accords in 1996. About 83 percent of those killed were Mayan, according to a 1999 report written by the U.N.-backed Commission for Historical Clarification titled ‘Guatemala: Memory of Silence.’ The report also concluded that the vast majority, 93 percent, of human rights violations perpetrated during the conflict were carried out by state forces and military groups.” Miller, “Timeline: Guatemala's Brutal Civil War.”

<sup>267</sup> Antonio Cañas, and Héctor Dada, “Political Transition and Institutionalization in El Salvador,” in *Comparative Peace Processes in Latin America*, ed. Cynthia J. Arnson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 103.

addition, the military faced decreasing political support due to poor economic conditions and international outcries at human rights violations and state-directed atrocities.<sup>268</sup> Decreasing legitimacy caused the Guatemalan military to advocate a “controlled process of democratization in part to burnish Guatemala’s image in the United States and the international community.”<sup>269</sup> The 1985 election of President Vinicio Cerezo started the democratization process, despite continual coup threats through his presidency and Jorge Serrano’s that lead to the peace transition and end of the civil war.<sup>270</sup>

The 1996 election of President Alvaro Arzu Irigoyen began the transition to peace. President Arzu ordered the paramilitary Civil Self-Defense Patrols to disband, and he halted “counterinsurgency operations against leftist guerillas.”<sup>271</sup> The Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) rebels had been effectively defeated, and they were willing to negotiate terms for a cease-fire to end the 36 year civil war.<sup>272</sup>

During the peace negotiations, the military used its bargaining leverage to protect its members’ socioeconomic positions. For example, according to Vickers, “negotiations over internal security reforms occupied a relatively small amount of time (months), while negotiations over a social/economic accord dragged on for more than a year.”<sup>273</sup> The military members’ socioeconomic standings were threatened by the democratization process triggered by their decreasing political support during the civil war.

The peace negotiation process also preserved the corrupt nature of the SECFOR and the impunity enjoyed during the civil war.<sup>274</sup> The negotiations resulted in

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<sup>268</sup> Miller, “Timeline: Guatemala’s Brutal Civil War.”

<sup>269</sup> Mark Peceny and William Stanley, “Liberal Social Reconstruction and the Resolution of Civil Wars in Central America,” *International Organization* 55, no. 1 (2001): 170.

<sup>270</sup> Atha, “Transitions to Peace,” 40.

<sup>271</sup> Timelines of History, “Timeline Guatemala.”

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> George R. Vickers, “Renegotiating Internal Security: The Lessons of Central America,” in *Comparative Peace Processes in Latin America*, ed. Cynthia J. Arnson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

<sup>274</sup> In 1986, General Humberto Mejia Victores issued a blanket self-amnesty for acts committed during the 3-year rule of the military government.” “President Cerezo declared another blanket amnesty, approved by congress, that covered government acts from 1982–1988.” Timeline Guatemala, <http://timelines.ws/countries/GUATEMALA.HTML>.

reconciliation terms and conditions that included amnesty for atrocities committed. In addition, the negotiations protected the SECFOR's institution by leaving its personnel and capabilities largely intact, therefore perpetuating the rampant corruption in its ranks.<sup>275</sup> Vickers explains, "the Guatemalan army refused to consider any kind of equivalent of the Salvadoran ad hoc commission that reviewed officers' records. It did agree to the creation of a 'commission to clarify the past'...prohibited from naming individuals responsible for abuses."<sup>276</sup> Furthermore, the military's strength allowed it to preserve its impunity through the creation of a special investigation unit called *la oficinita*. *La oficinita* was designed to aid the governments prosecutorial efforts to try military members in civil courts, and it operated under the supervision of former military members who simply protected their own and impeded investigations.<sup>277</sup>

Corruption continued in the military and police forces. Though military avoided the purge of its forces, the accords mandated one-third force reductions. Those forced out were typically involved with corruption, narcotics, and human rights abuse charges.<sup>278</sup> A complicated dynamic occurred where former soldiers conducted illicit activities while their former brothers-in-arms operated the newly created National Civilian Police (PNC) force. The combination produced a "highly powerful criminal cartel" that easily corrupts its former peers and government officials who either participate in or turn a blind-eye to the illicit activities.<sup>279</sup>

To address rising crime, police reforms under President Arzú incorporated the former police force into the newly created PNC. The PNC was led by "officers from the old police force, infamous for their corruption, abuse and incompetence."<sup>280</sup> These

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<sup>275</sup> Atha, "Transitions to Peace," 37, 41–43. In 1991, the "Bush administration requested the extradition of LtCol. Carlos Ochoa Ruiz on cocaine trafficking charges." Timelines of History, "Timeline Guatemala."

<sup>276</sup> Vickers, "Renegotiating Internal Security," 397.

<sup>277</sup> Atha, "Transitions to Peace," 41–42.

<sup>278</sup> Ana Arana, "The New Battle for Central America," *Foreign Affairs* 80 no. 6 (2001): 91.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>280</sup> Marie-Louise Glebbeek, "Police Reform and the Peace Process in Guatemala: the Fifth Promotion of the National Civilian Police," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 20, no. 4 (2001): 452.

characteristics contributed to a force abjectly inadequate; moreover, recruit standards have been lowered to meet quotas and training requirements decreased, which further exacerbated the inadequacy of the force.<sup>281</sup> In addition, the PNC creation did not require a screening process to vet its recruits.<sup>282</sup> This allowed former military members (those who were forced out with a mandatory draw down), many who were perpetrators or complicit in the human rights violations during the civil war, to infiltrate the PNC ranks.<sup>283</sup> Therefore, the peace negotiations actually institutionalized corruption and incompetence.

The military's ability to leverage the terms of the peace accords solidified its institutional future by its own terms. Doing so allowed its strengths, along with all of its fractural weaknesses, to continue. The institutional SC weaknesses have yielded widespread corruption that continues into the post-war era and has effectively negated SC to deal with increasing DTPs.

## **E. ANALYSIS**

The subtle differences in Nicaragua and Guatemala's transition to democracy and peace have resulted in different SC levels following the wars. Nicaragua's SECFOR dictated the terms of negotiation with the Contras, which resulted in maintaining a highly competent force coupled with very capable intelligence services (MINT). In addition, Nicaragua's internal police policies reinforced and improved upon existing capacities that were effective before the transition. With the SECFOR's capabilities intact and improved upon, Nicaragua's ability to combat the effects of DTOs amid shared regional vulnerabilities was high. On the contrary, Guatemala's transition simply institutionalized a corrupt, inept, and inefficient SECFOR that has contributed to decreasing SC since the peace accords were signed in 1996.

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<sup>281</sup> Atha, "Transitions to Peace," 43.

<sup>282</sup> Vickers, "Renegotiating Internal Security," 398.

<sup>283</sup> Atha states, "This critical omission, and the desire to expedite the creation of the new National Civilian Police (PNC), resulted in a large numbers of the old forces remaining as part of the new security forces, perpetuating corrupt and abusive practices." Atha, "Transitions to Peace," 41.

Nicaragua and Guatemala's DTPs increased during the drug trafficking supply route transition that started in the 1990s, and they have remained consistent to the present day. DTPs have a negative impact on SL; therefore, if a country's SC is able to maintain or overcome those impacts, then SL will be higher than in countries in which the SC cannot. To determine the effects that DTPs have on SL it is necessary to look at SC variables. The IVs governance and SECFOR numbers versus the state legitimacy dependent variables (DVs) of homicide and clearance rates should show a predictable relationship. That is, if DTPs are constant or the same in the region, then as SC increases, clearance rates should also increase while homicide rates decrease. Clearance rates are an indicator of SECFOR SC effectiveness. Therefore, knowing that DTPs increased in the region during this timeframe, looking at the SCs of each country can assist in evaluating what SL status each country is in (stable, state under siege, narco-state, and vulnerable). The following discussion of the independent variables and dependent variable will underscore this argument.

#### **1. IV 1: Drug Trafficking Pressures in Central America: Crime, Gangs, and Corruption Rates**

Crime rates are a good indicator of effective SC. That is, as SECFOR or rule of law SC improves, criminals should be deterred from committing crimes. Therefore, as SC increases, crime rates should lower, and if SL decreases, crime rates rise. DTPs are directly related to high crime and violence rates in Central America. The DTOs' migration into the bridge countries has created a caldron for violence as competition for territories increased and supply routes became fiercely contested.<sup>284</sup> Competition for territory and supply routes occurred as cartels, like the Sinaloa and Los Zetas, were forced to operate in other areas as a result of Mexican and U.S. drug interdiction efforts in the Caribbean.<sup>285</sup>

Violence and crime is also linked to street gangs. Central America suffers from a proliferation of street gangs due to its proximity to drug trafficking areas, the presence of

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<sup>284</sup> U.S. Senate Caucus, *Responding to Violence*, 16.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.* 17.

a youthful majority more apt to engage in violence, and weak state institutional capacities to counter illegal activities.<sup>286</sup> These characteristics combine with high inequality, corruption, and the influence of DTOs to create a socially disruptive force that prevents growth and development from occurring. According to Al Valdez, “The connection between street and prison gangs and foreign DTOs is strong and will continue to afford the opportunity for employment.”<sup>287</sup> The lack of economic opportunities and scarceness of jobs encourages illegal activities, which serve as alternatives for youths who enter gangs.<sup>288</sup>

Central America is a region of weak states vulnerable to DTPs. The socioeconomic and political characteristics create an environment in which the weakened institutions of the state combine with the corrupt nature of the population so that DTOs can operate with relative impunity. DTOs increase pressure on SC with higher crime rates, more gang activity, and rampant corruption. These traits feed a seemingly endless cycle in which the capacity of the state to combat DTOs is undermined through the DTOs’ ability to corrupt key political leaders and law enforcement officials. Until Central American states create institutional change to increase SC and combat corruption, DTOs will continue to take advantage of their weaknesses for their own personal gains. Although the above squarely focuses on the variable of DTO pressure, the second variable that looks at the changes in state capacity is discussed in the cases analyses.

## **2. IV 2: State Capacity: Governance and Security Forces**

State capacity will be measured by two indicators. The first is governance and the second are the military and police rates. Collectively, both indicators provide a clear picture for measuring SC.

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<sup>286</sup> Thomas Bruneau, Lucía Dammert, and Elizabeth Skinner, eds., *Maras: Gang Violence and Security in Central America* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2011), 9, 10.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

*a. Governance*

The World Bank’s aggregate governance indicators measure a country’s SC across six categories.<sup>289</sup> The average percentiles of those categories are plotted in Figure 6. The figure foreshadows predictable results for each country’s state model in terms of SL. For instance, the governance percentiles for the United States are in the highest 25 percent, which would predict a high SL and stable state. On the contrary, Haiti is in the lowest 25 percent for governance; it has low SL and is a narco-state. Guatemala and Nicaragua hover above a narco-state in the state under siege percentile and their SLs should be a reflection of their respective SC’s. SLs are discussed later in the chapter.

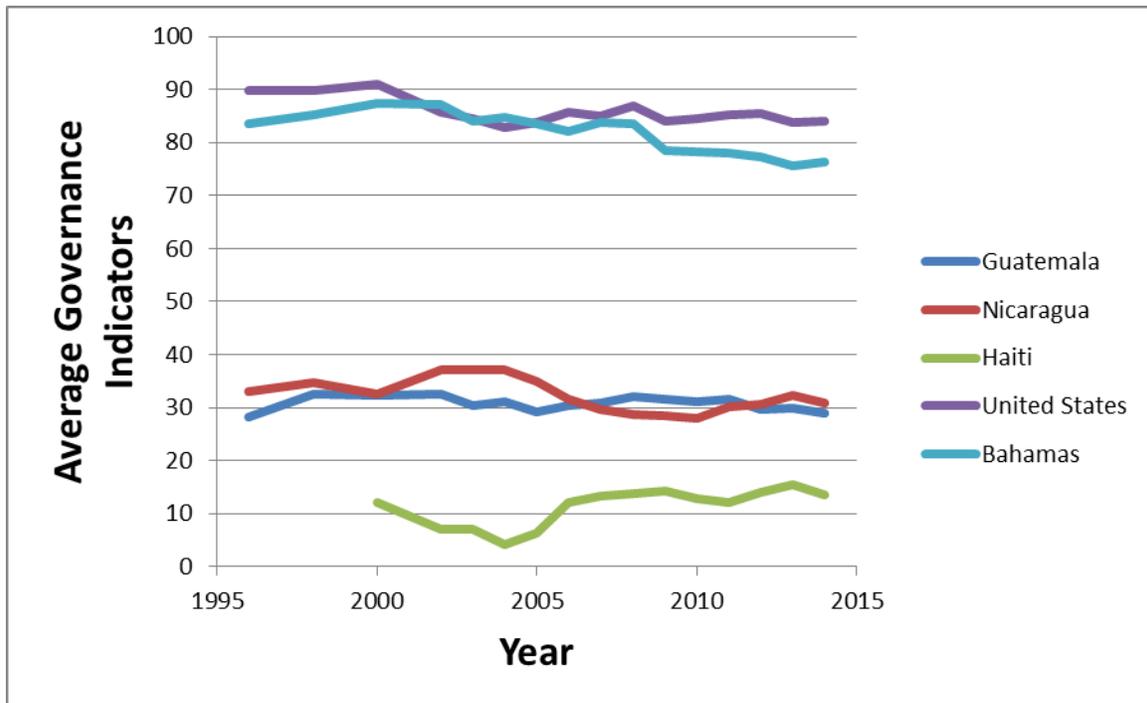


Figure 6. Governance Comparisons<sup>290</sup>

<sup>289</sup> The governance indicators measure control of corruption, government effectiveness, political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, regulatory quality, rule of law, and voice and accountability. World Bank, accessed June 4, 2016, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=worldwide-governance-indicators> “World Bank Governance Indicators”

<sup>290</sup> Adapted from: “Worldwide Governance Indicators,” World Bank, accessed April 8, 2016, <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=worldwide-governance-indicators#>.

**b. Security Forces**

In Guatemala, the PNC is still too small in relation to its population. For example, in 2006, Guatemala's police per 100,000 citizens was 1.56; similarly, Nicaragua's police rate was 1.79.<sup>291</sup> The numbers alone are statistically detrimental to effective SC, as the "UN recommends that a country employ at least 222 police officers for every 100,000 residents."<sup>292</sup> In 2014, Guatemala's police rate is 162, certainly much better than in 2006; however, the high homicide rates in the country mean that the larger police force is rather ineffective at combating crime. On the contrary, Nicaragua can boast as being one of the safest countries in the region (second to Costa Rica), despite being the poorest and also has the lowest police force. In 2012, Nicaragua's police rate was 180, the lowest in the region at the time.<sup>293</sup>

The second component to SECFOR numbers is the military. Traditionally, Latin American countries rely on their militaries to perform internal police functions due to ineffective police forces. Nicaragua and Guatemala are no different, as their militaries functioned against both external and internal threats leading up to their peace transitions. Once the peace transition occurred, military rates expectedly dropped. For example, Figure 7 shows the military rates for both countries from 1985 to 2005.<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Atha, "Transitions to Peace," 50.

<sup>292</sup> Corcoran, "Report Puts Guatemala National Police."

<sup>293</sup> "Crime in Nicaragua: A Surprising Safe Haven. How Central America's Poorest Country Became One of Its Safest," *Economist*, January 28, 2012, <http://www.economist.com/node/21543492>.

<sup>294</sup> "Crime, Police Officers: Countries Compared," Nationmaster, accessed June 4, 2016, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Crime/Police-officers>.

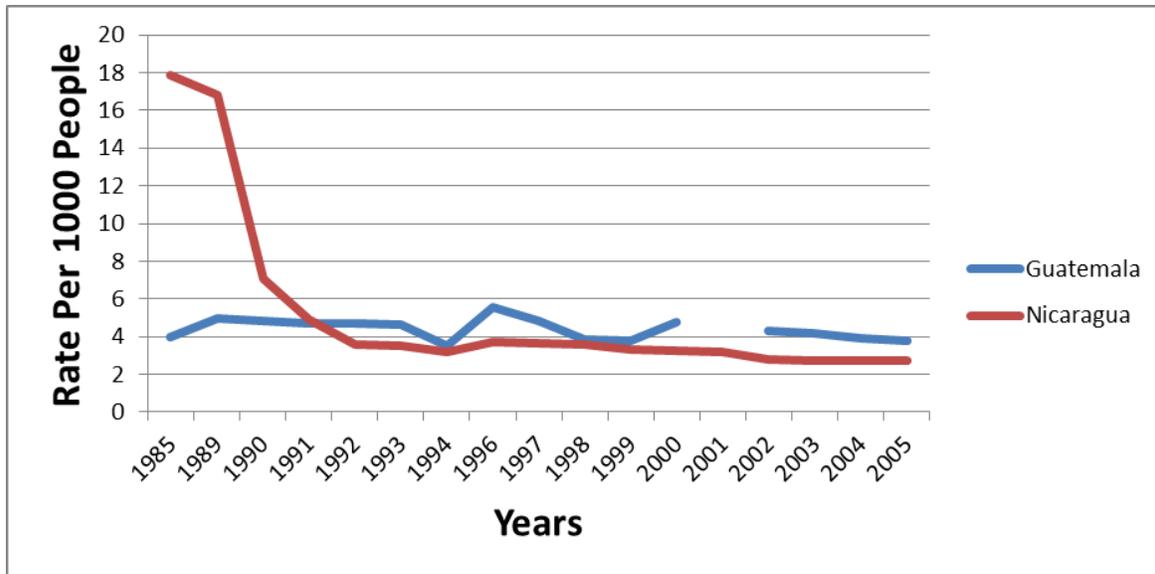


Figure 7. Military rates for Nicaragua and Guatemala from 1985 to 2005<sup>295</sup>

Nicaragua’s military rates were 4.5 times higher than Guatemala’s were in 1985, but they have remained lower than Guatemala’s since the peace transition. Nicaragua’s peace transition in 1990 shows an expected drop in military rates to 4.93 by 1991. What the figure shows is Nicaragua’s comparatively higher SC in terms of military rates prior to transition, while Guatemala’s remained relatively steady throughout its democratization and transition to peace after the civil war. Since both countries’ military rates are relatively similar, SECFOR SC differences are a result of policing effectiveness in the face of steady or increasing DTPs.

#### F. STATE LEGITIMACY DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Clearance rates explain the significant difference between the two countries’ SECFOR SC.<sup>296</sup> Maximizing effectiveness and use of resources available is something

<sup>295</sup> Adapted from: “Crime, Police Officers: Countries Compared,” Nationmaster, accessed June 4, 2016, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Crime/Police-officers>.

<sup>296</sup> The clearance rate is “a key performance indicator for both uniformed personnel and investigating officers, as both parties play a key role in gathering information and witnesses, and apprehending suspects.” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC] and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region [LAC] of the World Bank, *Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean* (Report No. 37820) (UNODC and the LAC of the World Bank, 2007), <http://scm.oas.org/pdfs/2008/cp20887e01.pdf>, 114.

Nicaragua clearly does better than Guatemala. The differences reflect Nicaragua's retention of a competent and effective SECFOR in contrast to a corrupt and ineffective SECFOR in Guatemala after their peace transitions.<sup>297</sup> For example, in 2006 Nicaragua's clearance rate was 81 percent, a close second to Costa Rica's 82 percent (highest in Central America).<sup>298</sup> Comparatively, Guatemala's clearance rate was seven percent in 2000 and dropped to an abysmal two percent in 2005.<sup>299</sup>

Guatemala's poor clearance rates signify ineffective and inadequate capacity, which leads to mistrust and does not serve to deter criminal activity. The reputation of police and the criminal justice system is measured by their ability to identify suspects and prosecute them effectively. Therefore, low clearance rates as a measure of police SC effectiveness should equate to higher crime rates.

Figure 8 depicts the different homicide rates from 1992 to 2012 in Nicaragua and Guatemala. Nicaragua has a comparatively much lower homicide rate than Guatemala. These numbers are expected as Nicaragua has a more capable SECFOR, based on its clearance rates. In addition, Nicaragua's emphasis on grassroots level intelligence collecting and crime prevention makes up for its lack of SECFOR members in relation to its neighbors. For example, police forces are assisted by "100,000 volunteers...including law and psychology students; 10,000 former gang members, who mentor youths via baseball in the barrios; and nearly 4,000 domestic-violence victims, who persuade women to speak out."<sup>300</sup> The augmentation of these volunteer programs originated from the 1979 revolt against the Somoza dictatorship and refusal to have police like the Somozan Guard.<sup>301</sup>

Guatemala's very high homicide rates confirm lower SECFOR SC based on clearance rates. Despite Guatemala's comparative advantage of military force rates, yet

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<sup>297</sup> Atha, "Transitions to Peace," 52-53.

<sup>298</sup> UNODC, *Crime and Development*, 31.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> "Crime in Nicaragua: A Surprising Safe Haven. How Central America's Poorest Country Became One of Its Safest," *Economist*, January 28, 2012, <http://www.economist.com/node/21543492>.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*

similar police force rates with Nicaragua, its homicide rates were 3.5 times greater than its neighbor in 2012.<sup>302</sup> Therefore, Guatemala’s homicide rate confirms its ineffective SECFOR SC.

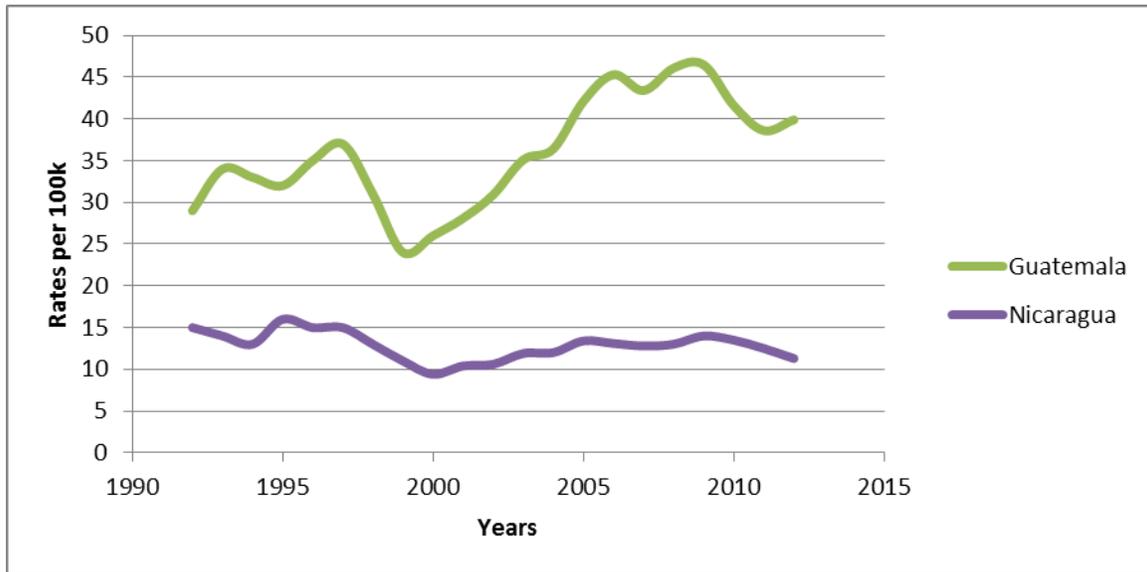


Figure 8. Homicide Rates in Nicaragua and Guatemala from 1990 to 2015<sup>303</sup>

Where DTPs remained consistent or increased, such as in Guatemala and Nicaragua, the differences in SC help to explain the differences in SL. Now that we have determined the different SC levels, we can relate those to the perceived SL in each country.

**G. MEASURING STATE LEGITIMACY**

SL reflects the interaction between DTPs and SC. DTPs have a negative impact on SL, while SC has a positive effect on SL. SC’s ability to combat the effects of DTPs

<sup>302</sup> “UNODC Statistics,” accessed June 4, 2016, <https://data.unodc.org>; “Crime, Murders, Per Capita: Countries Compared,” Nationmaster, accessed June 4, 2016, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Crime/Murders/Per-capita>.

<sup>303</sup> Data from 1992 to 2000 adapted from “Crime, Murders, Per Capita: Countries Compared,” Nationmaster, accessed June 4, 2016, <http://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Crime/Murders/Per-capita>. Data from 2001 to 2012 adapted from: “UNODC Statistics,” UNODC, accessed June 4, 2016, <https://data.unodc.org>.

determines the level of SL perceived by its citizens. SL is measured by support for stable democracy, corruption, and perception of physical security.

The first SL measurement is support for a stable democracy, which is the combination of “political legitimacy (defined in terms of support for the system) and tolerance toward political opposition.”<sup>304</sup> Guatemala’s support for a stable democracy improved slightly from 21.2 percent in 2004 to 22.7 percent in 2010.<sup>305</sup> Comparatively, Nicaragua’s went from 28.3 percent to 29.1 percent in the same period.<sup>306</sup> Regional comparisons are 25.6 percent for El Salvador, 40.4 percent for the U.S., and 46.6 percent for Costa Rica.<sup>307</sup> Guatemala’s percentage is in the worst percentile quarter, which places its SL for this measurement in the narco-state model. Nicaragua’s support for a stable democracy measurement hovers slightly above the narco-state in the state under siege state model (26–50 percent).

The next SL measurement is corruption. Guatemala’s perception of corruption increased from 70.5 percent in 2004 to 75.5 percent in 2010.<sup>308</sup> Comparatively, Nicaragua’s went from 71.9 percent to 67.5 percent respectively.<sup>309</sup> Regional comparisons are 64.6 percent for El Salvador, 69.9 percent for the U.S., and 78 percent for Costa Rica. Based on these percentages, Guatemala’s SL for this measurement is in the worst percentile quarter (76–100 percent), which places its SL for this measurement in the narco-state model. Nicaragua’s perception of corruption is still in the state under siege model (51–75 percent).

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<sup>304</sup> Dinorah Azpuru, *Political Culture of Democracy in Guatemala, 2010* (Washington, DC: U.S. Agency for International Development, 2010), <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/guatemala/2010-political-culture-English.pdf>, 99.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>306</sup> Azpuru, *Political Culture*, 112; John A. Booth, *Political Culture of Democracy in Nicaragua* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University: 2010), 103.

<sup>307</sup> Azpuru, *Political Culture*, 109.

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>309</sup> Booth, *Political Culture of Democracy*, 77.

The third SL measurement is perception of insecurity. Guatemala's perception of insecurity decreased from 45.5 percent in 2004 to 39.9 percent in 2010.<sup>310</sup> Comparatively, Nicaragua's went from 45.5 in 2004 to 38.9 percent in 2010.<sup>311</sup> Regional comparisons are 22.5 percent for the United States, 32.2 percent for Costa Rica, and 49.7 percent for El Salvador.<sup>312</sup> These percentages put both Guatemala's and Nicaragua's SL for this measurement in the state under siege model (26–50 percent).

Guatemala's legitimacy during these periods reflects the relationship between increasing DTP and low SC in terms of governance and SECFOR. Despite its perceived strength in the SECFOR SC area during the civil war, the underlying corruption and ineffectiveness of its SECFOR could not withstand sustained DTPs. The continued and institutionalized corruption that followed the peace accords willfully allowed DTOs to continue illicit activities to the detriment of the population. The effects of decreasing SC, high corruption, and continued, if not increasing DTPs, has resulted in lower state legitimacy. Therefore, high DTP combined with low SC results in Guatemala's overall low SL.

Examining Nicaragua and Guatemala's SL statuses validates the hypothesis that when DTP increases, SL decreases if SC is unable to combat the negative DTP impacts. Both countries faced similar geographic, economic, and cultural conditions; therefore, the only difference between the two is their SCs. The different SCs resulted in Nicaragua having a higher SL than Guatemala. Table 5 summarizes the resulting SL statuses for both countries.

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<sup>310</sup> Azpuru, *Political Culture*, 73.

<sup>311</sup> Booth, *Political Culture of Democracy*, 66.

<sup>312</sup> Azpuru, *Political Culture*, 72.

Table 5. State Legitimacy Outcomes Nicaragua and Guatemala

		<b>Independent Variable: 1 DTO PRESSURE</b>	<b>Independent Variable 2: State Capacity</b>	<b>Dependent Variable: State Legitimacy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Case 1	Nicaragua 1980s	Low	Low	Low: Civil-war indicates low legitimacy	Vulnerable/ Narco-state
Case2	Nicaragua 1990- Present	High	High	High	Under siege
Case 3	Guatemala: 1980s	Low	Low	Low: Civil-war indicates low legitimacy	Vulnerable
Case 4	Guatemala 1990– Present	High	Low	Low	Under siege/ Narco-state

## H. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Nicaragua and Guatemala’s militaries held strong positions at the negotiating tables during the transition to democracy/civilian rule. The strong positions allowed the SECFOR to remain mostly intact, with the same core personnel and competencies. In Nicaragua, the military was supported by a wide base of the population; however, in Guatemala, the military’s human rights violations, criminal networking with DTOs, and rampant corruption alienated them from the general population. The institutionalization of positive characteristics, capabilities, and effectiveness explains the different SCs between Nicaragua and Guatemala and their ability to handle DTPs

A difference between Guatemala and Nicaragua’s SECFOR is the level of corruption that permeates the ranks. Nicaragua seemingly has less corruption by its officials or linkages to cooperating with DTOs. This seems natural as the FSLN fought against the Contras, who were funded by drug trafficking profits via the CIA. Guatemalan SECFOR personnel, including very high-ranking officers, are inherently

involved in DTO activities and the rampant spread of corruption throughout the country. These differences help to explain the differences in SECFOR SC after the peace transition and the willingness to combat DTO activities when DTP increased, starting in the 1990s and continuing to the present day. In addition, the overall ineffectiveness of Guatemala's SECFOR results in significantly lower clearance rates than Nicaragua. The lower clearance rates support the higher homicide rates in Guatemala too.

This chapter illustrates that drug trafficking pressure, coupled with weak state capacity, reduces state legitimacy. In Guatemala, high pressure and weak states have undermined the state, and thus the democratic regime following its civil war. In contrast, Nicaragua was able to withstand the pressure from drug trafficking because of high state capacity, thus bolstering the legitimacy of the state and also the democratic regime that controls it. The next and final chapter summarizes these findings and places them in comparative perspective the Caribbean cases analyzed in Chapter II.

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## IV. CONCLUSION

Table 6 depicts the historical context for state legitimacy in each of the four covered case studies once DTOs entered the region.

Table 6. State Legitimacy Outcomes

		<b>Independent Variable: 1 DTO PRESSURE</b>	<b>Independent Variable 2: State Capacity</b>	<b>Dependent Variable: State Legitimacy</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Case 1	Haiti 1980–Present	High	Low	Low	Narco-state
Case 2	Bahamas 1980–2000	High	Med	Med	Under siege
	2000–Present	Med	High	High	Stable
Case 3	Nicaragua 1980–1990	Low	Low	Low due to Civil war	Vulnerable/Narco-state
	1990–Present	High	High	High	Under siege
Case 4	Guatemala: 1980s	Low	Low	Low due to Civil-war	Vulnerable
	1990–Present	High	Low	Low	Under siege/Narco-state

In Haiti, the effects of DTPs and SC on SL is still evident today in all four case study countries. Haiti’s dysfunctional political, economic, and institutional SC were once again evident in a recent deadly attack on a police headquarters on May 16, 2016. The attack occurred in the wake of continued delays for a presidential election to replace interim President Jocelerme Privert. Many suspect coup leader and senatorial hopeful Guy Philippe as the mastermind behind the attacks.<sup>313</sup> Until Haiti can improve its SC

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<sup>313</sup> Joseph Guyler Delva, “Deadly Attack on Haiti Police Headquarters as Tensions Escalate,” Reuters, May 16, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-haiti-politics-violence-idUSKCN0Y72EF>.

deficiencies, it will remain vulnerable to DTPs and its SL will remain low and in a narco-state status.

The Bahamas' SL remains high as evidenced by recent political and SECFOR related events. On June 7, 2016, a highly contested referendum concerning constitutional reforms occurred peacefully. Despite the outcome, both sides respected the people's decisions, and there was no resulting violence.<sup>314</sup> Also on the same day, police forces seized 200 pounds of marijuana from a suspected drug dealer in Nassau.<sup>315</sup> Both events display competent political and SECFOR state capacities that continue to supersede competing DTPs. Therefore, the Bahamas' SL remains high and in a stable status.

In contrast to the stability in the Bahamas, Nicaragua remains a state under siege. The 1980s Contra rebels still exist and are determined to overthrow President Ortega.<sup>316</sup> In addition, the Contras are teaming up with DTOs because they lack the foreign funding they received during the 1980s. This subservient alliance between Contra rebels and DTOs poses challenges to Nicaragua's SC as evidenced by recent spells of violence in the rural areas that have left "police officers, civilians and soldiers dead."<sup>317</sup> The Contras are fighting against the consolidation of power and economic favoritism under President Ortega.<sup>318</sup> Despite its high SECFOR SC, Nicaragua's political turmoil could combine with economic woes, leading to a situation in which SC is vulnerable to DTPs. Therefore, Nicaragua's SL remains high, but it is in an under siege status.

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<sup>314</sup> "Christie: The Voice of the People Will Be Respected," *The Nassau Guardian*, June 8, 2016, <http://www.thenassauguardian.com/news/65396-christie-the-voice-of-the-people-will-be-respected>.

<sup>315</sup> Stephen Dean, "RBPf Nassau: Large Drug Seizure-Manhunt Underway for Suspect in Vehicle Chase," *Bahamas Weekly*, June 7, 2016, [http://www.thebahamasweekly.com/publish/persons-wanted-by-the-rbpf-police/RBPF\\_Nassau\\_Large\\_drug\\_seizure\\_-\\_Manhunt\\_underway\\_for\\_Suspect\\_in\\_vehicle\\_chase48755.shtml](http://www.thebahamasweekly.com/publish/persons-wanted-by-the-rbpf-police/RBPF_Nassau_Large_drug_seizure_-_Manhunt_underway_for_Suspect_in_vehicle_chase48755.shtml).

<sup>316</sup> Frances Robles, "Ortega vs. the Contras: Nicaragua Endures an '80s Revival," *New York Times*, March 8, 2016, [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/08/world/americas/ortega-vs-the-contras-nicaragua-endures-an-80s-revival.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/08/world/americas/ortega-vs-the-contras-nicaragua-endures-an-80s-revival.html?_r=0).

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>318</sup> According to an article by Robles, "Though Mr. Ortega enjoys strong support among the poor, he was widely criticized for constitutional changes that repealed term limits, allowing him to run this year for a third consecutive term. Students, opposition politicians and other protesters flock to the elections board every Wednesday to rally against his consolidation of power." Robles, "Ortega vs. the Contras."

Lastly, Guatemala still faces many variables that keeps its legitimacy in an under siege status. One issue is that Guatemala's political capacity rests with newly elected President Jimmy Morales, a former comedian with no prior political experience. President Morales has vowed to fight corruption at every level of government, but his association with "hardline military figures accused of human rights violations" could impede progress.<sup>319</sup> In addition, Guatemala faces challenges to its SECFOR with continual border disputes with Belize. On April 22, 2016, Guatemala's army massed along the border in response to the shooting death of a 13-year-old boy by Belizean troops.<sup>320</sup> Finally, Guatemala's population lacks confidence in the healthcare system to combat the Zika virus.<sup>321</sup> Roughly 53 percent of people surveyed in Guatemala are not confident the government can control the virus.<sup>322</sup> All of these variables create additional strains on an already tenuous Guatemalan SC, leaving Guatemala vulnerable to DTPs and in an under siege SL status.

This thesis shows that SL is negatively impacted by the independent variable DTP and positively affected by the independent variable SC. Variation in SL is due to differences in the ability of SC to combat the negative effects of DTPs. That is, when DTPs increase, SL decreases if SC is low or weak. The four SL statuses (stable, vulnerable, under siege, and narco-state) are a result of the relationship between the IVs, wherein the output is dependent upon SC's strength.

Since DTPs increased throughout the Caribbean in the 1970s–1980s, and then shifted to Central America, their influences affected SL differently as SC strength varied in different countries. The four case studies (Haiti, the Bahamas, Nicaragua, and

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<sup>319</sup> Jack Guy, "Jimmy Morales Sworn in as Guatemala's President," *Telegraph*, January 15, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/centralamericaandthecaribbean/guatemala/12101032/Jimmy-Morales-sworn-in-as-Guatemalas-president.html>.

<sup>320</sup> Associated Press, "Guatemala Troops Mass near Belize Border after Shooting Incident," *Guardian*, April 22, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/22/guatemalan-troops-mass-belize-border-shooting-incident>.

<sup>321</sup> Jessica Glenza, "Zika Virus: Survey Shows Many Latin Americans Lack Faith in Handling of Crisis," *Guardian*, February 9, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/09/zika-virus-survey-many-latin-americans-lack-faith-handling-crisis>.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*

Guatemala) provide numerous reasons why SC differed. Cultural influences, the economy, and geography all play a role, but each country's experience with these variables is what has led to differences in SC.

For instance, Haiti's low SC is a result of cultural and institutional influences. Colonial heritage is a large factor in the accepted high levels of corruption found in Spanish colonies. Haiti is no exception, and its affinity for patrimonialism and corruption has allowed the mulatto and Duvalierism ideologies to flourish. These influences have led to poor policy choices and result in low SC as evidenced by Haiti's governance and SECFOR measurements. Furthermore, the unfortunate earthquake shattered the institutional remnants of state capacity, which leaves Haiti vulnerable to DTPs and in a narco-state SL status.

In the case of the Bahamas, it faced similar institutional, geographic, and economic influences as Haiti did when DTPs increased during the 1970s–1980s. The difference in SC outcomes is due to policy choices that set the Bahamas on a different path than its troubled neighbor. For instance, the Bahamas' early historical battles with illicit activities led to the British colonial government implementing policy choices resulting in increased SC to counter the negative effects. The struggle to counter the effects of illicit activities continued through the post-independence political woes that plagued the country amid rampant corruption in the 1980s–1990s. The decisions to cooperate with the United States and to improve its SECFOR counternarcotic measures has resulted in the Bahamas having a higher SC than Haiti. The Bahamas' significantly higher SECFOR rates and its stable governance percentiles as compared those of Haiti allow its SC to support a stable SL status.

In Central America, regional characteristics, such as high levels of violence, poverty, and inequality are coupled with the geographic proximity to South American drug producing countries, and this creates vulnerabilities to increasing DTPs. Nicaragua and Guatemala are subjected to all of these vulnerabilities, and they shared very similar paths to democracy: both gained independence from Spain, were ruled by dictators, and fought civil wars. Despite the similarities, Nicaragua's SC is higher than that of Guatemala.

Since Nicaragua and Guatemala have similar governance percentiles, differences in SECFOR SC account for the perceived different SL statuses. Nicaragua’s higher SC compared to Guatemala’s is a result of policy choices by the Nicaraguan government to improve SECFOR SC during the transitions to democracy. Nicaragua’s SECFOR SC is more efficient and capable than Guatemala’s because of continued improvements and support from the United States. Both countries are states under siege; however, Nicaragua’s SL status means it is closer to a vulnerable state than Guatemala due to its higher SC.

The four case studies prove that SL status is a result of policy choices to improve SC (see Table 7 for each case study’s SL status). The research design dispelled geographically-based explanations for differences in SC by making comparisons in the Caribbean and Central America. Furthermore, economic conditions are ruled out since all of the countries experienced similar economic circumstances. The case of Nicaragua especially rules out economic factors for low SC as it is the poorest country in Central America, yet its SC is higher than that of its neighbors and it is considered the safest. Therefore, a country’s SL status is a direct reflection of the decisions it makes to improve SC to combat negative DTP effects.

Table 7. State Legitimacy Status Nicaragua and Guatemala

		DRUG TRAFFICKING PRESSURES (DTPs)	
		Low	High
STATE CAPACITY (SC)	Low	Vulnerable	Narco-State Haiti
	High	Stable Bahamas	Under Siege Nicaragua Guatemala

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